

PRESS RELEASE

PIETER HUGO
"WORKS 2002-2007"



In Tyrone Brand's bedroom, 2006, C-Print, Edition of 5 +2AP, 121.5 x 102.5 cm

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PIETER HUGO

“WORKS 2002 - 2007”

17 April – 31 May 2008

Two years after his first solo show in Switzerland, Galerie bertrand & gruner is pleased once again to present the work of Pieter Hugo.

Born in 1976 in South Africa, Hugo was awarded the World Press Photo prize for portraiture in 2006. He was also named the Standard Bank Young Artist for Visual Art 2007. In the past year, Hugo has held solo shows in New York (Yossi Milo Gallery), Los Angeles (Stephen Cohen Gallery) and Rome (Extraspaio). Recent group shows he has taken part in include *Reality Check: Contemporary Art Photography from South Africa 2007* (Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz), *An Atlas of Events* (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon) and *Faccia a Faccia: Il nuovo ritratto fotografico* (FORMA, Centro Internazionale di Fotografia, Milan). In 2008, he will take part in *Street & Studio: An Urban History of Photography* mounted by Tate Modern (London), in collaboration with the Folkwang Museum (Essen).

Three monographs of Hugo's work have been published: *Looking Aside* (2006), *Messina/Musina* (2007) and *The Hyena & Other Men* (2007). “Works 2002-2007” offers an extensive overview of each of these series.

‘Gadawan Kura’ - The Hyena & Other Men continues the work Hugo began in 2005. Once again the photographer crisscrosses Nigeria following a traveling group of men, baboons, hyenas and pythons. From town to town the troupe parades its animals before a stunned audience, taking the opportunity to sell them amulets and traditional medicines. It's a profitable business, all the more so when the men occasionally step out of their role as public entertainers to take advantage of the ferocity of their hyenas and extort money from people.

Produced in 2006, the series **Messina/Musina** focuses on the small town of Musina, located in the far north of South Africa on the border with Zimbabwe. The town was formerly known as Messina, and in 2002 its name was changed to correct a colonial misspelling of the name of the Musina people who previously lived in the region. In the heart of the bush, on the major trucking route north, Musina is inhabited by a diverse population drawn there by the possibility of earning money working on the mines or on farms. Hugo's photographic series, which is made up of family portraits, interiors and landscapes, offers a sensitive examination of a community in transition.

The same sensitivity and respect for the photographed subject characterizes **Looking Aside** (2004-2006), a series of close-up portraits of people with albinism and others, including the blind and elderly, whose appearance makes them the victims of embarrassed looks or even societal rejection.

Shown together for the first time, these three series reveal a photographer who is fully committed to his subjects.



Looking Aside (selection), 2004 - 2006, archival pigment on cotton rag paper, 56 x 45.5 cm each



Abdullahi Mohammed with Mainasara, Lagos, Nigeria, 2007, C-Print, Edition of 9 + 2AP, 110 x 112 cm

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