



CONTEMPORARY IMAGES IN PRINT SINCE 1915

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The Guides: Justyna Badach

March 16 – May 27, 2006

Thursday, March 16, 2006

Artist Talks: 5:00 p.m. and Opening Reception: 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

PHILADELPHIA: This new series of photographs by Philadelphia resident Justyna Badach presents several changes in her work. To begin, it marks her return to color photographs after having printed digitally since 1999 and despite her allergic reaction to the chemicals. Tired of the computer screen, Badach missed the hands-on process in the darkroom. Secondly, and more importantly, Badach reintroduces people into her photographs. Her previous work almost exclusively dealt with the landscape imbued with cultural dislocation and personal isolation. On the contrary, in *The Guides* the human figure is the subject matter and the focus of our attention while the architectural background becomes almost unnecessary. In this series, Badach reverts to street photography with the interest to merge the distance of the stranger and the proximity, or intimacy, of the photograph into one image. Her subject is the tourist and the tour guide; the latter purposely making him- or herself stand out from the group by the choice of majestic or whimsical flag, umbrella or staff. The tourists appear to blend in with the group or attempt to appear as inconspicuous as possible. As the artist notes, the guided tour gives the visitor a chance of being an insider, to have access to information and sights unavailable to those who do not participate. At the same time, being in a group of people all holding or wearing cameras and guided by a person holding an umbrella or something of the sort, is itself highly visible. Badach's series *The Guides*, repetitive in form and composition, depicts the tourist's desire to blend into and gain access to a new culture and yet their photographs of this new place will all be similar, capturing all the same sites.

Justyna Badach is currently Associate Professor of Photography at University of Delaware, previously teaching at Drexel University since 2000. She received her MFA in Photography from Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1998 and has been awarded most recently a Leeway Foundation Special Opportunity Grant (2004) and a Pennsylvania Council on the Arts S.O.S. Grant (2003). Her solo exhibitions include the Philadelphia International Airport (2004) and Leonard Pearlstein Gallery at Drexel University (2005). Her photographs have been included in several group exhibitions at Vox Populi Gallery (2005), Studio Thomas Kellner, Germany (2005), Main Line Art Center (2003) and White Columns, New York (2001).

The Print Center supports printmaking and photography as vital contemporary arts and encourages the appreciation of the printed image in all its forms. The Print Center presents a variety of programs for the public including 11 exhibitions annually; The Print Center Gallery Store, offering the largest and most diverse selection of contemporary prints in Philadelphia; the longest running annual international competition for prints and photographs in the country; an extensive series of continuing education programs and special events.

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