



Half Prada, 2003, c-print with plexi face mount,
78 ½ x 54 ½ inches

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jenkins Johnson Gallery presents

Melanie Pullen

at

Paris Photo

Stage 32, Booth 16

April 30 – May 3, 2015

Paramount Studios, Los Angeles



Stairs, 2004, c-print with plexi face mount,
54 x 40 ½ inches

Jenkins Johnson Gallery is pleased to announce participation in the upcoming Paris Photo fair at Paramount Studios in Los Angeles, opening Thursday, April 30 and running from May 1 through May 3. The gallery will feature photographs by Los Angeles-based **Melanie Pullen**, including pieces from *High Fashion Crime Scenes* and introducing her *Haunted* series. Simultaneously, Jenkins Johnson Gallery will feature the premiere piece from Pullen's *Soda Pop* series at Art Market San Francisco, open from April 29 – May 3 at Fort Mason. At Paris Photo Los Angeles, Pullen will participate in a book signing for *High Fashion Crime Scenes* (Nazraeli Press) on Saturday, May 2 from 1 – 3 pm in the gallery booth, located on Stage 32, Booth 16.

Pullen's renowned body of work, *High Fashion Crime Scenes*, includes over 100 large-scale photographs of recreated Los Angeles and New York City crime scenes from the 1940s and '50s, in which Pullen outfitted "victims" in haute couture. Pullen created the work, which includes several sub-series, after studying Luc Sante's book *Evidence*, which featured vintage New York police crime photography from 1914 to 1919; Pullen was struck by how she only remembered the visual details of the person and setting rather than the crime, largely forming her basis for this body of work. Pullen was also inspired by mid-20th Century newspaper photographer Weegee, who was adept at capturing the dark corners of urban life with an eye for composition, lighting, and drama that is not seen in contemporary crime scene photography.

Fascinated by how society has become apathetic in how we respond to violent images, Pullen explores high fashion's ability to obscure or emphasize harsh visual realities. "I took this horrific subject and turned it into something aesthetic," Pullen states. "My goal is that the last thing you'll notice is the crime." Each sub-series takes about two years to complete and uses over \$13 million worth of clothing and accessories loaned by Chanel, Gucci, and Bvlgari, and other fashion houses. Pullen employs up to 60 crewmembers and models per scene, methodically researching primary materials including police records and documents from the county coroner's office to ensure an air of vintage authenticity in the final photograph.

Pullen's photographs raise questions of the human obsession with the tragedies of others, as well as serving as a memento mori for the contemporary audience. Her newest series, *Haunted*, also addresses these darker undertones, featuring the split second before a tragedy or an occurrence that changes one's life, right before the subject realizes something dramatic is about to happen.

Melanie Pullen's work has been exhibited internationally, including a solo exhibitions at Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Jacksonville, FL and Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Her work is in the collections of: MOCA Jacksonville, FL; Santa Barbara Museum, CA; Museo Jumex, Mexico City; Forward Thinking Museum; Weisman Art Foundation; Nasher Collection; Howard Stein Collection. Pullen's photographic series have also been featured in numerous publications and broadcasts including: NY Times Magazine, LA Times, SF Chronicle, The London Independent, ArtReview, Art Forum, Vogue, Elle, Fortune, W, GQ, Rolling Stone, NPR, CBS Radio, CBS News, and Last Call with Carson Daly.

Please contact Karen Jenkins-Johnson for additional information at nyc@jenkinsjohnsongallery.com or 415.677.0770.
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Ghosts (The Haunted Series), 2015, ink on paper,
75 2/5 x 60 inches



Phones, 2005, c-print,
43 x 54 3/4 inches