

MURRAY GUY

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METTE TRONVOLL

22 May - 26 June 1999

Until recently, Mette Tronvoll's photographic portraits were taken within the defined and predetermined structure of the studio. In this series, she has taken her experience of this discipline outside, applying it to her portrayals of people as she encountered them in their homeland.

Last summer Tronvoll was awarded a residency in Greenland, where she spent two months traversing the dramatic arctic landscape. She travelled alone, camping beside the natural hot springs of the island of Unartoq in the south of the country and visiting the reindeer station of Isortoq at the foot of the inland ice. In her attempt to approach a totally unknown culture, an originally nomadic people with a rich history of Norse settlers, the land itself was necessarily portrayed along with its inhabitants.

Born in Norway, now living in New York, Tronvoll is interested in how location is reflected in culture, which is particularly evident in this series. The photograph conveys the relationship with the world that each person bears inside themselves. In the manner a pose is assumed or not, there is social meaning, custom. Examining the photographic image as a method of documentation, reference and portrayal, these portraits represent a particular presence within a singular terrain. The exotic becomes near and intimate whilst the familiar seems abstract, strange, faraway, creating a sense of both participation and alienation.

Photographs from earlier series by Mette Tronvoll can be seen at First New York: Staff Gallery, until June 25. She will participate in exhibitions at the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo and the Kunsthalle Nürnberg, in 1999 and the Kunstraum, Luzern, in 2000. Tronvoll has recently been awarded residencies at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin and Cité des Arts, Paris.

Please call Margaret Murray or Janice Guy for further information at 212 463 7372
Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 10am - 6pm