

Martine Fougeron: *Teen Tribe*

April 25 – June 14, 2014

Opening Reception: Friday, April 25th, 2014, 6 - 8 pm



Adrien on Drums with Band, 2007

From April 25 through June 14, 2014, Gallery 339 is pleased to present Martine Fougeron's **Teen Tribe**. The gallery will host an opening reception on Friday, April 25, 2014, from 6:00 – 8:00 pm.

In 2005, Martine Fougeron began working on a series of portraits of her two teenage sons, Nicolas and Adrien. Fougeron had observed that there was little photographic work that portrayed adolescent boys, and the work that did exist typically portrayed dysfunction and despair. Through her sons, she saw that male adolescence was challenging but also extraordinary, with many moments of celebration, discovery and exuberance. Fougeron set out to present a nuanced portrait of teenage life—one that included the inquisitive energy and fabulous dreams that she witnessed on a daily basis. As the project proceeded, and friends of her sons were drawn into the images, **Teen Tribe** evolved into something even more complex and insightful. While Fougeron deftly portrays the characteristics of teenage life that she initially set out to capture, she also gets at the compelling dichotomy of adolescence—the struggle to establish a distinct sense of self while closely bonding with a new tribe of friends, classmates and romantic interests. Through this series of portraits, Fougeron poignantly conveys a conflicted and remarkable period of transformation.

The series, which spans early teen years through beginning college, has received numerous awards, and the work has been included in many exhibitions and publications. A number of critics have noted and marveled at Fougeron's ability to walk the extremely delicate line between parent and social observer. The images have the intimacy and loving eye that a mother might render, but they are also astute and sufficiently objective to give the work a sense of honesty. Speaking on NPR, curator and critic Charlotte Cotton called it "one of the best biographical stories that photography has crafted in the 2000s," and *New Yorker* photo critic Vince Aletti said that "Fougeron's pictures have a lovely looseness and spontaneity, but they never feel like snapshots. Color energizes the work and adds to its sensual undertow." For the images themselves, Fougeron was inspired by conventions of cinema, as well as Dutch painting, particularly Vermeer's mysterious domestic scenes.

Martine Fougeron was born and educated in France, and attended college in France at l'Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris and at Wellesley College in the United States. Following a successful career as a Creative Director in the fragrance industry, Fougeron embarked on a new career as a photographer, and over the last ten years, she has received substantial attention for her work. Her photographs have been widely exhibited in institutions and galleries around the world, and her incisive images of life and culture have made her a frequent contributor to *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*, and *New York Magazine*. Fougeron's fine art work has also entered several important public and private collections, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and The Elton John Collection. Fougeron lives in New York and is on the faculty of the International Center for Photography.

Teen Tribe is made possible through the support of the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès.

Gallery 339 is located at 339 South 21st Street (at the corner of Pine Street) in Center City, Philadelphia. The Gallery is open Wednesday – Saturday, 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm, and by appointment. For more information, contact Martin McNamara at 215-731-1530 or mmcnamara@Gallery339.com.



Photo Credits (Left to Right): *Paul G. and Ada, Bowery*, 2009; *Nicolas Napping*, 2006.

High Resolution Images Available Upon Request