



For Immediate Release:

INTERNATIONAL DISCOVERIES III

**Twelve Artists from
Argentina, Brazil,
Italy, Korea, Romania,
Russia, U.K., U.S.,
and Uruguay**

**October 27 –
December 22, 2011**

**Artist Reception:
Thursday, October 27,
6-9pm**

**FotoFest Headquarters
1113 Vine Street
Houston, Texas, U.S.A.**



Francesco Giusti, Fidele, Member of the SAPE (Société des Ambianceurs et des Personnes Élégantes) [Society of Elegant People], Pointe Noire, Republic of the Congo, May 2009

HOUSTON, TEXAS - OCTOBER 11, 2011 - FotoFest announces a new exhibition of work from around the world, *International Discoveries III*. Opening Thursday, October 27, 2011 and continuing through December 22, 2011, *International Discoveries III* features the work of 12 international artists from eight countries and the United States, the exhibition is the third in a series created by FotoFest to showcase outstanding new contemporary talent discovered by FotoFest's curators at photography events across the world.

The works in the exhibit present color digital images and black and white film-based photography. The faces of young U.S. Marines in Afghanistan. The elegant boulevardiers of the Congo. Memories of an Argentine family and the experiences of young Eastern European women. The spectacular construction of the new Hoover Dam bypass. The delicacy of the Uruguayan countryside. Portraits of an Afro-British family. The sea off the coast of Rio de Janeiro. Young people from Russia. Ancient statues of Buddha carved into the stones of Korea. These are all images from *International Discoveries III*.

"This exhibit showcases an international network of events, like FotoFest, dedicated to exposing new work and new talent and connecting artists to opportunities across borders" says FotoFest Senior Curator Wendy Watriss. "The emergence, growth and interconnection of non-profit photography festivals and commercial trade fairs across the world have made it possible for artists to move around and curators to find new work all over the world."

The 12 featured artists are: Julia Curtin (U.K.); José Diniz (Brazil); Francisco Giusti (Italy); Kyu-Ho Kim (Korea); Marcia Michael (U.K.); Liliana Molero (Uruguay); Dana Popa (Romania); Louie Palu (USA); Jamey Stillings (USA); Lorena Guillén Vaschetti (Argentina); Oleg Videnin (Russia); and Ryu Tae Yeol (Korea)

British artist **Julia Curtin** appropriates 1930s photographs from U.S. Farm Security Administration archives, including the work of Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange, and constructs three-dimensional models of Depression-era homes, the transitory, vernacular structures depicted in the photographs. Julia Curtin was encountered at the Rhubarb-Rhubarb Portfolio Review in Birmingham, England.

Fellow Briton, **Marcia Michael**, also delves into archives, looking at historical representations of Black people in the U.K. After searching and finding very few positive, empathetic historical photographs of Black people and families in national archives, the artist was prompted to make images of her own family, appropriating the viewpoint and methods of historic anthropometric photography, to explore the idea of heredity and concepts of stereotyping, classification and social control. Marcia Michael was also encountered at the Rhubarb-Rhubarb Portfolio Review in Birmingham, England.

Lorena Guillén Vaschetti explores the personal history of her family, a large and complicated Italian family living in Argentina, now reduced to just two members – the artist and her mother. Using family photographs and slides made before she was born along with other ephemera rescued from the trash, the artist explores the role and veracity of photography in documenting personal histories, the questions they raise, and their relevance to contemporary generations. FotoFest curators met Lorena Vaschetti at the Encuentros Abiertos in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Brazilian **José Diniz**' dynamic and dramatic black & white photographs present a decidedly un-romantic view of the ocean off the coast of Rio de Janeiro, a place so often associated with sun and fun on the beach. The images, made on the water, floating literally on the waves, are devoid of bikinis and resorts, instead focused on distant horizons, disembodied sails and lonely lighthouses on rocky, uninhabited outcrops. FotoFest Creative directors met Mr. Diniz at the FestFotoPoA, Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Kyu-Ho Kim's family has lived in an area of Seoul, South Korea known as Bukgajwa-dong for the past 43 years. When the city began implementing a redevelopment plan called "New Town" older buildings were torn down to make way for the new master-planned development. These partially demolished homes and business, stirred mixed emotions in the artist. Sadness for the destruction of his neighborhood, and appreciation for the raw and beautiful forms found within in the demolition. Kyu-Ho Kim's photographs were seen at the Daegu Photo Biennale, Daegu, Korea.

Liliana Molero makes poetic and spiritual landscape photographs in Uruguay's coastal ranching department of Rocha. The soft, dream-like images are made in the early morning, in fog and mist and are further altered by manipulation of the film's exposure and development. Liliana Molero met FotoFest curators at the Encuentros Abiertos in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Oleg Videnin's black & white portraits are made mostly around his hometown of Bryansk in far western Russia. The portraits, mostly of young people and children, are frank and alternately sweet and arresting. A former broadcasting personality and executive, Mr. Videnin is now affiliated with Agency.Photographer.Ru, a partner of Magnum Photos. His work was seen by FotoFest creative directors at Lens Culture FotoFest Paris portfolio review.



José Diniz, *Itacare* from the series *Do Chão do Mar [At the Level of the Sea]*, 2010

The colorful and flamboyant men photographed by Italian artist **Francesco Giusti** are members of the *Société des Ambianceurs et des Personnes Élégantes* (SAPE), a tradition in the Congo whose roots reach back to French Colonization in the early 20th Century. Emulating the true French “Monsieur,” the men are dandys, admired by others for their taste and sophistication. The members of the SAPE inject a touch of glamour into a humble environment. With eccentric and amusing nicknames, they gather in bars and dancing halls on the weekends before embarking on extemporaneous parades for the amusement of passersbys. Francesco Giusti’s work was encountered by FotoFest Creative Directors at the Fotografica Bogota Festival, Bogota, Colombia.

The U.S. Marines in **Louie Palu**’s photographs saw some of the most intense fighting of the Afghan war. Photographed near the end of their deployment, the young Marines’ faces are hardened and dust covered, staring directly into the camera with an unflinching gaze. Louie Palu’s photographs were seen at the Photolucida portfolio review in Portland, Oregon.

Dana Popa’s work is focused on social justice issues, particularly human rights. Her series *Not Natasha* deals with the sex trafficking of young Eastern European women, some as young as 12, to brothels in Western Europe and elsewhere. A very small number of women escape the cycle of abuse that is prostitution. Ms. Popa, a Romanian living in London, photographed 17 survivors, documenting their stories and photographing them. Ms. Popa’s work was encountered at the Lens Culture FotoFest Paris portfolio review.

Jamey Stilling first began photographing the Hoover Dam Bypass Bridge in 2009. The bridge, 1900 feet long, is the longest concrete arch span in the U.S. and is an engineering marvel. Mr. Stilling’s images, taken at night with the illuminated construction site standing stark against the desert night sky, evoke something magical and a childhood sense of awe. FotoFest curators reviewed Jamey Stilling at the Photolucida portfolio review in Portland, Oregon.

Korean artist **Ryu Tae Yeol** photographs stone statues of the Buddha at locations around the world, with reverence and stillness. It is almost as if the process of photographing the sculpture is a form of meditation. Buddhism is over 2,500 years old and spread from its birthplace in India across Asia and beyond. Statues of the Buddha invariably were erected wherever the philosophy spread. Sometimes they take the form of a child and sometimes an old man. At times he is laughing and at others he is in silent meditation. In all he is meant to embody the spirit of the man and the enlightenment he achieved. Ryu Tea Yeo is a discovery from the Daegu Photo Biennale, Daegu, Korea.

International Discoveries III features over 100 prints and opens with an **Artists Reception, Thursday, October 27, 2011, 6-9pm** at FotoFest in downtown Houston, 1113 Vine Street 77002 from 6-9pm. A number of the artists will also participate in a **free, public tour of the exhibit, Saturday, October 29, 2pm at FotoFest.**

Since its founding in 1983, FotoFest has been a leader in international exchange. In 2000, FotoFest was a principal force in the formation of the international Festival of Light (festivaloflight.net) network, uniting 22 festivals around the world from Buenos Aires, Argentina to Odense, Denmark, Montreal, Canada and Moscow, Russia. FotoFest’s well-known Meeting Place portfolio review for artists has been replicated by events in 20 countries in Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia and Australia. The International Discoveries series is a product of these international interconnections and collaborations between festivals.

FotoFest, with Houston Center for Photography, presents another exhibition this Fall focused on photographers in Houston. **HOUSTON 175: PEOPLE**, celebrating the 175th anniversary of the city’s founding, is on view October 20 - December 2, 2011 at One and Two Allen Center in Downtown Houston. The exhibition features the work of 15 artists who have made extended projects on the people and communities of Houston.

International Discoveries III is the last exhibition presented by Fotofest before the **FotoFest 2012 Biennial**, focused on **Contemporary Russian Photography, March 16 - April 29, 2012**. More information on the FotoFest 2012 Biennial may be found on the FotoFest website at www.fotofest.org.

For more information or visuals from *International Discoveries III*, please contact:
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FOTOFEST 2010-2011 EXHIBITION SPONSORS

The Houston Endowment Inc., The City of Houston through the Houston Arts Alliance, Texas Commission on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, The Wortham Foundation, Judith and Gamble Baldwin, Continental Airlines, FotoFest Board of Directors, iLand Internet Solutions, KUHF 88.7 FM, HexaGroup, Vine Street Studios, Weingarten Realty, The Oshman Foundation, William and Rosalie Hitchcock, Frazier King, The Samuels Foundation – The Endowment Fund of the Jewish Community of Houston

FOTOFEST INTERNATIONAL

Founded in 1983 by photographers Frederick Baldwin and Wendy Watriss, FotoFest is a year-round, international non-profit organization promoting the photographic arts and education. FotoFest started the first and longest-running international citywide festival of photography in the U.S. The Biennial festivals and FotoFest's year-long programming are known for their presentation of important talent, contemporary and historical, from around the world. In selecting its exhibitions and related art programs, FotoFest has a strong commitment to aesthetic quality and important social ideas. FotoFest has curated and commissioned exhibitions of photo-based art from Latin America, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Its Biennial portfolio review, the Meeting Place, is considered one of the best in the world. In addition to its year-round art programming, FotoFest's school-based education program, Literacy Through Photography, uses photography to stimulate visual literacy, writing and analytical thinking.

For more information, please call 713-223-5522 ext 19 or visit www.fotofest.org.