

DANZIGERPROJECTS
534 WEST 24TH STREET
NEW YORK NY 10011
TEL: 212 629 6778
DANZIGERPROJECTS.COM

Viviane Sassen

March 4 – April 10, 2010

Opening reception: March 4, 6-8pm

Over the past several years, Viviane Sassen has emerged as one of the freshest voices in European photography. Already an acclaimed fashion photographer whose work appears regularly in magazines such as French VOGUE, Purple, V, and i-D, in 2001 Sassen began regular trips to Africa, where she had lived as a child. Her work there moved away from fashion and documentary and towards an ongoing body of collaborative portraits.

In this work she has established a visual vocabulary that is stylized, symbolic and mysterious. Her aesthetic combines a sense of childhood memory, where scenes are crystallized and highly saturated with color with a photographer's sensitivity to the body and surface. The strong presence of shadow and darkness in Sassen's images provokes more questions than answers. If there is such a thing as magical realism in photography, these photographs embody it.

This exhibition, Sassen's first American showing, draws on work from three series - 'Die Son Sien Alles' (The Sun Sees Everything), made in South Africa; 'Flamboya', made in Zambia and East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania); and the series 'Ultra Violet', made in Ghana. These portraits combine the spontaneous with the staged, and often come out of ideas that Sassen carries in a sketchbook of inspirations for future compositions. These ideas are shared with her subjects as the starting point for each photograph. Critic Vince Aletti commented, "Her photographs tease convention but with witty and unexpected results, partly because her subjects are all young Africans who seem to have enjoyed collaborating with her. She tends to treat the body as a sculptural element — a malleable shape that combines with blocks of shadow and bright color in arrangements that sometimes read like cut-paper collages, bold and abstract but full of vibrant life."

Viviane Sassen was born in Amsterdam in 1972. In 1997, she received her Master of Fine Arts degree from the Royal Academy in Arnhem, the Netherlands. Since then she has found great success as a photographer, publishing work in avant-garde magazines throughout the world. In addition, she has shot advertising campaigns for clients including Louis Vuitton, Adidas, Stella McCartney and Vitra.

In 2007, she received the Prix de Rome, the major Dutch prize for art, for her series 'Ultra Violet'. Ms. Sassen's work has been exhibited in museums throughout Europe and was featured in a 2008 - 2009 solo show in Amsterdam's prestigious FOAM (Photo Museum of Amsterdam). Her African photographs have also been published in the monograph, *Flamboya*.

For more information, please call 212 629-6778 or e-mail info@danzigerprojects.com