

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Jitka Hanzlová: *There is something I don't know***

October 25 – November 24, 2012

Opening Reception Thursday, October 25, 6-8pm



The Yancey Richardson Gallery is pleased to present *There is something I don't know*, the first full solo show at the gallery for Czech artist Jitka Hanzlová. In her most recent series, Hanzlová explores the style and manner of Renaissance portraiture through a contemporary photographic lens. Making her portraits in various European cities, including Milan, Madrid, and Essen, Germany, the artist's adopted home since 1982, Hanzlová sought out individuals whose presence was evocative of the portraits from the Renaissance period. As the artist states, "I can't make those *Quattrocentro* portraits. That time is gone. Those portraits are done. I live in a different time and space. I want to and can make portraits of today...looking for people who seem to have something of that time."

The subjects of Hanzlová's portraits are men and women, young and old, each dressed in contemporary clothes and presented with a dignified, archetypal pose against a simple background. Subjects face the camera directly, or in three-quarter or full profile, often lit with a subtle natural light and possessing enigmatic, contemplative expressions. The works are certainly Hanzlová's homage to masterpieces of Renaissance portraiture such as da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, and Piero della Francesca's *Duke and Duchess of Urbino*, but they are also distinct and provocative illustrations of an ineffable timelessness characteristic of much of Hanzlová's photographs.

Hanzlová's first major body of work, *Rokytnik* (1990-1994), is a meditation on the tiny Czech village she'd fled a decade earlier during the Communist regime. The series of portraits and landscapes of her former home is the foundation for all her subsequent bodies of work, each one investigating notions of memory, belonging, alienation and identity in the context of place. Even *Forest*, Hanzlová's penetrating exploration of the forest around her childhood village, can be interpreted as a kind of extended portraiture, a psychic portrait of memory and loss.

A major retrospective of Hanzlová's photography from the last two decades was organized by Fundación MAPFRE in Madrid this spring and has travelled to the National Galleries of Scotland, where it will be on display through February 3, 2013.

Born in Czechoslovakia in 1958, Jitka Hanzlová has lived in Germany since 1982. She has had solo exhibitions in several international museums, including the Museum Folkwang, Essen, the Fotomuseum, Winterthur, and the Stedelijk, Amsterdam. She is the winner of the 2007 BMW Prize at Paris Photo, the 2003 Grand Prix Award, Arles, and was shortlisted for the 2001 Citibank Photography Prize. Her work is held in the permanent collections of several major museums, including the Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Stedelijk Museum, and the Fotomuseum Winterthur, among many others.

For visuals, please contact Maggie Waterhouse at [mseidel@yanceyrichardson.com](mailto:mseidel@yanceyrichardson.com)