

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Tom Hunter**  
***Life and Death in Hackney***  
**October 23 - November 29, 2003**  
**Reception for the artist: Thursday, October 23, 6- 8 PM**  
**Gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 10 - 6**

The Yancey Richardson Gallery is pleased to present *Life and Death in Hackney*, the New York debut exhibition of color photographs by British artist Tom Hunter. On view from October 23 through November 29, 2003, the exhibition is comprised of a selection of work from Hunter's two series, *Persons Unknown* and *Life and Death in Hackney*. In his politically-based works, Hunter photographs friends and neighbors in the post-industrial neighborhood of Hackney, a section of London comprised of abandoned industrial warehouses and weedy canals, presenting them in carefully composed, beautifully lit and richly colored tableaux which reinterpret the paintings of Vermeer, in *Persons Unknown* and the Pre-Raphaelites in *Life and Death in Hackney*. His work explores the idea of the village as a kind of universe and our concepts of beauty and ugliness; finally, he uses the sensuous beauty of his images to deliver a utopian message about the alternative lifestyles of squatters and travelers.

*Persons Unknown* is comprised of interior portraits of the squatters who have formed a community on the fringe of capitalist society, settling in the abandoned warehouses of Hackney. In one image, a young woman illuminated by window light from the left is reading a possession order, not a letter; in another, a young woman seated at a tapestry-covered table is writing an affidavit. In *Life and Death in Hackney* Hunter concentrates primarily on exteriors, transforming the weedy, overgrown ditches and wasteland of Hackney into lush, verdant landscapes. In *The Way Home*, a woman floats peacefully in a roadside canal referencing the Tate Britain's painting *Ophelia* by John Everett Millais.

Hunter was born in Bournemouth, England in 1965 and received his M.A. from the Royal College of Art. He has shown widely in England including the Saatchi Gallery, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the National Portrait Gallery, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, and the Courthauld Institute of Art in addition to exhibiting in the U.S. at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Hunter was featured in the 2003 Turin Biennale of Photography and will be included in a group show at The Weatherspoon Art Museum in January 2004. In September 2003 the recent monograph on his work by Hatje Cantz was awarded the John Kobal Prize at the Victoria & Albert Museum.