

HIONAS GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE

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Burton Machen *Urban Evolution:* **PORTRAITS PROJECT**

APRIL 19 – MAY 19, 2012
Opening Thurs April 19, 6-8pm



Cindy... 10/10/2010 2:44:08 PM Los Angeles, CA
Robert... 03/02/2011 3:39:46 PM, New York City
Andy... 03/15/2010 4:12:17 PM Los Angeles, CA

New York, NY (March 22, 2012) - Hionas Gallery is pleased to present **Urban Evolution: PORTRAITS PROJECT**, from renowned photographer and street artist **Burton Machen**. In this exhibition, his first in New York City since 2010, Machen has selected a number of works from his bi-coastal Portraits Project (Los Angeles and New York), in which the artist posts two-tone photographs of artists, celebrities, political figures and other notable personalities on walls throughout the city streets. Inevitably each poster comes to bear the markings of various passersby, who tear, stamp, spray paint and/or affix random items to the portraits. The majority of Machen's selected works are photographic pigment prints of the original on-site portrait, each of which assuredly looks far different now, if in fact it still exists.

Rather than perceiving the "destruction" of these portraits as a form of urban decay, Machen sees an evolution taking place; sometimes quick but more often a slow and gradual metamorphosis, wherein the individual subject solicits a variety of responses and actions from anonymous sources. Upon returning to each – weeks if not months after the fact - to capture and time stamp the newly evolved portrait, the end result in some instances represents a symbolic commentary on the subject at hand.

In Machen's *Andy...* 3/15/2010 4:12:17 PM Los Angeles, CA, the seemingly random supplements to Warhol's portrait all converge to create a unique representation that the artist himself probably would have relished. In each eyeglass lens sits a S-shaped snake, with two swords forming a V and piercing the snake from head to tail, resembling U.S. dollar signs. A skeleton figure grins at the viewer from the upper right-hand corner, holding a Polaroid camera with his flesh-and-bone hand. Machen's subjects for this exhibition comprise a who's who of celebrities culled from the worlds of fashion and art, including the likes of Jean-Michel Basquiat, Princess Diana, Debbie Harry, David Hockney, Robert Mapplethorpe, Alexander McQueen, Kate Moss, Terry Richardson, Cindy Sherman, Patti Smith, Andy Warhol, and several others.

The gallery will hold a **private opening reception** for *Urban Evolution: PORTRAITS PROJECT* on **Thursday, April 19**, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.

About the Artist:

Burton Machen (b. 1970) was born and raised in Ashville, Alabama. He has been photographing street art and urban decay for more than a decade in cities throughout the world, including New York, Los Angeles, New Orleans, London, and Paris. Machen is drawn by the collage- and assemblage-like effect that occurs when artists and elements converge in unexpected ways within urban settings. *Urban Evolution* is Machen's first photographic series focusing on street art that reflects this fascination. Most works from the *Urban Evolution: PORTRAITS PROJECT* series originated in New York City.

Machen's work was recently included in The Whitney Art Party and *The Warholian*, at the Royal/T in Los Angeles, where Eric Shiner, then Milton Fine Curator of The Andy Warhol Museum, selected Machen's portrait *Andy...* to be exhibited, alongside works by Damien Hirst, Richard Prince, Jeff Koons, Shepard Fairey, Kenny Scharf, and of course Andy Warhol himself. He has had portraits commissioned by the likes of Beth Rudin DeWoody and Jack Cohen, and is included in a number of prominent private collections worldwide. Machen splits his time between New York and Los Angeles.

About Hionas Gallery:

Hionas Gallery is a 500 sf. exhibition space located at 89 Franklin Street in a classic TriBeCa storefront. The gallery invites contemporary and emerging artists, working in all variety of media, to participate in monthly solo exhibitions to showcase their latest work and artistic vision. The gallery space resides in the storefront of the personal fitness studio, Peter Anthony Fitness, also owned and operated by Peter Hionas. Gallery owners Peter and Maria Hionas officially opened the gallery in June 2011. "We have been avid collectors of contemporary art since 1991," says Peter Hionas. "It's a modest storefront we have here, but also really spacious and versatile. I see us as operating in the tradition of the old Betty Parsons Gallery in midtown, or the original White Cube in St. James's; small spaces that just show great art."

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