



Mona Kuhn, *Portrait 55*, 2011, *Flowers*, New York

## NYC Gallery Shows THE NEW YORK LIST, 3/23/2012 by Emily Nathan

### **Mona Kuhn, Bordeaux Series**

Flowers

529 West 20th Street

Feb. 24-Mar. 24, 2010

Tall, blond and personable, the Los Angeles photographer Mona Kuhn (b. 1969) could have stepped right out of some sci-fi arcadian future, a quality she shares with her own photographs of handsome young men and women in the nude. Golden and pink and umber against a sepia-toned background, the subjects of these spare, square portraits, who often gaze right out at the viewer, are almost too perfect to be true. It's a nudist utopia, one that is all the more erotic for its serenity and restraint.

Kuhn's earlier series, which were seen in New York at the Charles Cowles Gallery, was also a hedonistic vision, with inordinately attractive young people posed naked in groups in rooms as if something delicious was in the air. The new photographs are less fantasia and more socially present, with the subjects selected from among the artist's friends and acquaintances in rural France, and photographed against a simple patterned backdrop in an open barn. It's the sort of mix of Apollonian calm and Dionysian potential that used to give Nietzsche visions of primordial harmony.

Kuhn is presently working on a new series set in the desert outside Los Angeles. As for these pictures, the smaller 15-inch-square photos, done in editions of eight, are \$4,000.