

# SHOOT THE FAMILY

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CONTEMPORARYARTMUSEUMSTLOUIS



Zhang Huan, *Foam #4* and *Foam #9*, 1998, Chromogenic print, 60 x 40 inches.  
Collection of the artist.

### ***Shoot the Family***

*Shoot the Family* is an exhibition that explores the undercurrents of contemporary domestic life, focusing on artists' portrayals of members of their own families. The exhibition presents approximately 50 works made in the last fifteen years by sixteen artists active in North America, Europe and Asia. These artists use their relatives and partners as subjects, revealing that family matters are never simply personal, but inevitably encompass broader historical, social, and economic considerations.

Many recent artists exploring domesticity have turned to more complex reflections on who we are at home in the private space of family life. Perhaps as a reaction to the rise of design and "life-style" oriented art in the 1990s, some of the artists in *Shoot the Family* approach familial domesticity in terms of the psychological ambiguities and desires that erupt at the seams where memory and fantasy meet. Presenting scenarios of emotional closeness as well as failed connection, they expose suppressed ambivalence and conflict, fantasy and eroticism. The works presented in *Shoot the Family* shed light on the formation of each individual's physical, cultural, and sexual identity, on the nucleus that has shaped and influenced each artist, or in some cases, the values and traits that they have passed along to their own families. At the same time, the family is linked to a nexus of issues including the impact of war and financial hardship, the power of gender and ethnic stereotypes, and the effect of changing marital and generational roles.

This exhibition is marked by a strong sense of triangulation: these works focus on the charged relationships between the people taking the pictures and those portrayed. Shedding light on the way pictures are informed by the invisible relationships that structure their production, this work raises questions about voyeuristic mechanisms of photography and video, while calling attention to the role of emotional and psychological transference in the making of images. Emotionally incisive, conceptually diverse, and visually inventive, these artworks transform that most familiar artifact—the family photograph—into an illuminating investigation of contemporary culture.



Mitch Epstein, *Dad's Briefcase*, 2000, Chromogenic print, 22 1/2 x 28 inches.  
Collection of the artist; courtesy Sikkema Jenkins & Co.



Anneè Olofsson, *I put my foot deep in the tracks that you made*, 2000, Chromogenic print, 55 x 41 1/3 inches. Collection of the artist.

The artists featured in *Shoot the Family* include Yasser Aggour (b. 1972, lives in Brooklyn, New York); Janine Antoni (b. 1964, lives in Brooklyn, New York); Richard Billingham (b. 1970, lives in Hove, England); Miguel Calderón (b. 1971, lives in Mexico City, Mexico); Mitch Epstein (b. 1952, lives in New York, New York); Hai Bo (b. 1962, lives in Beijing, China); Lyle Ashton Harris (b. 1965, lives in New York, New York); Ari Marcopoulos (b. 1957, lives in Sonoma, California); Malerie Marder (b. 1971, lives in Los Angeles, California); Jonathon Monk (b. 1969, lives in Berlin, Germany); Anneè Olofsson (b. 1966, lives in Stockholm, Sweden and New York, New York); Adrian Paci (b. 1969, lives in Milan, Italy); Chris Verene (b. 1969, lives in Brooklyn, New York); Gillian Wearing (b. 1963, lives in London, England); Zhang Huan (b. 1965, lives in New York, New York).

*Shoot the Family* is a traveling exhibition organized and circulated by Independent Curators International (iCI), New York and curated by Ralph Rugoff. The exhibition, tour and publication are made possible, in part, by a grant from The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, with additional support from the iCI Exhibition Partners and the iCI independents. It is accompanied by a catalogue that includes an essay by Rugoff on the social and aesthetic dimensions of the works in the show, and a short story by author Lynne Tillman.



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cover image: Janine Antoni, *Momme*, 1995, Cibachrome print, 35 x 29 3/8 inches, framed.  
Collection of the artist; courtesy Luhring Augustine, New York.

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