

## Mona Kuhn: Evidence



Critics have observed that Mona Kuhn's subjects seem nude but not naked. Completely relaxed before the camera, they give the impression that nothing could clothe them better than their own skin. Kuhn, who photographs in the naturist or nudist community, often in domestic interiors, weaves together gestures from the traditional iconography of nude studies with the comfortable body language of her subjects, creating a visual patois at once classical and contemporary. And beneath the mellow surfaces of her photographs lies an explosive energy: the artists controlled play with the power of sensuality. Tension and uneasiness coexist with all that sunlight and soft flesh. The subjects and their gestures are suggestive but ultimately ambiguous. Tenuously held planes of focus provoke the imagination. Kuhn works very close to her subjects, often with a depth of field of only a few inches. Real world and image world seem to blend together as her figures unite the reality of human complexity with the blissful essence of nature. With only sparse reference to physical surroundings, they appear to float in an idyllic picture space, part of a dreamlike narrative just beyond the viewers comprehension. These exceptional photographs exist in a space created by the artist and subject alone--the viewer is given a single fascinating glimpse, suspended in time, and then an enduring sense of the resilience and vulnerability of the human body.

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