

# GAGOSIAN GALLERY

## PRESS RELEASE

Gagosian Gallery  
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## **SALLY MANN: MOTHER LAND RECENT LANDSCAPES OF GEORGIA AND VIRGINIA**

Thursday, September 25 - Saturday, October 25, 1997  
Reception for the artist: Saturday, September 27, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

The Gagosian Gallery will host the West Coast premiere of Sally Mann's new photographs, consisting of large format landscapes taken in rural Georgia and Virginia. The prints of the Georgia series are 38 x 48 inches, the Virginia series are 30 x 40 inches, and all are mounted in frames designed by the photographer.

In this new body of work, titled *MOTHER LAND: Recent Landscapes of Georgia and Virginia*, Sally Mann combines landscape, history, and the feminine to define the firmament of human life and psyche. In her celebrated *Immediate Family* pictures, her children and husband were the primary subjects, resulting in photographs that expressed a profound tension between innocence and high sensuousness. They also called attention to her entwined roles as mother, wife, and creator of those intimate and seductive images.

During the making of the *Immediate Family* series, Sally Mann felt increasingly drawn to the element of landscape, often finding these settings first, before deciding how she might incorporate her human subjects into the composition. Following this impulse, she began expeditions into the Southern countryside, not far from her home in Virginia, taking with her a large format camera and a selection of antique lenses, one of which was owned by Nadar, perhaps the greatest photographer of nineteenth century France.

*MOTHER LAND* is the result of these expeditions, and Mann portrays with great drama and insight the landscape's infinitely complex character. While the large format prints signify an intensely contemporary vision, the antique lenses sometimes impart halos of light, cracks, and distortions which embrace a sense of the past, of time and memory, and of the stark grandness of nineteenth century landscape photography. An *allée* of moss-hung live oaks, an urn set in an open glade, or the landscape itself, seen as a gorgeous relic, complete these remarkable images.

Like all of Sally Mann's prior work, the landscapes of *MOTHER LAND* are portraits. But their subject is now the terrain of human and of natural history, signified in the land. Its vast body and changing demeanor are portrayed with the deep sensuality, humanness, and emotion for which Sally Mann is eminently celebrated.