

STEPHEN WIRTZ GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DOUG & MIKE STARN
Attracted to Light
December 2-January 17, 2003

Opening reception: Thursday, December 4 from 5:30-7:30pm

Attracted to Light features Doug & Mike Starns' recent portraits of the nocturnal moths' mysterious and undeniable draw to light. This series focuses on their explorations into the conceptual and physical relationship of light and darkness. Most of these images were captured on the porches of the Starns' lakefront properties in upstate New York. According to Demetrio Paparoni, an essayist, "For the Starns, light is more than enlightenment; it is the gravity of all our past experiences and our future, the conscious and unconscious, the external and internal factors that drive our lives. The pull of gravity that light has over the corporeal body of the moths is like breathing, like thinking, impossible to deny." To create their unique portraiture of moths, special macro lenses were custom-made. Then, as is the artists' practice, they created printing methods and techniques that approximate and imply the metaphorical meaning of the subject and concept itself.

The Starns have been working in the territory between photography, sculpture and painting since the early 1980's, and occupy a unique position within contemporary art practices of photography. Their lifelong artistic collaboration has focused on the photographic print representing the cycles of time, change, and age. Their work has marked a shift away from the photograph as a sacrosanct two-dimensional image representing a concept or distanced view of life, towards a confrontation of photography's material existence and inherent fragility. Serving as a metaphor of life, their photographs are vessels for images that reflect upon these themes.

DOUG & MIKE STARN (b.1961, Absecon, NJ) are identical twins who came into international prominence through the 1987 Whitney Biennial in New York. A Blind Spot book, *Attracted to Light*, a collection of their moth images will be published by powerhouse Books in January 2004. The Starns are currently completing a 360-degree video-sculpture from their *Attracted to Light* Series commissioned by the Bohlen Foundation. They are also currently working on a 400-500 page monograph to be published by The Monacelli Press in 2004-2005. Upcoming exhibitions of the Starns' work in 2004 include a touring exhibition that will open in Sweden and another in France.

For additional information, please contact Ellen Mahoney (415)433-6879 or ellen@wirtzgalleries.com.