



photograph



IN PROFILE

Tracey Morgan
By Sarah Schmerler

Photo: Courtesy Melody Dowdy Photography

There are no sure things in the art world, but don't you ever wonder – When is the right time to move on, take a chance? When you're good and ready, and the conditions feel right, is Tracey Morgan's approach. Later this year, she will open a contemporary art gallery specializing in photography in Asheville, North Carolina, a town to which she only recently moved. Morgan worked in art sales and administration for some 20 years, 11 of them in New York, specializing in contemporary photography. "I've always been a bit of a nomadic person," says Morgan. "I mean, I'm 46 years old, and this is a time when most people are settling down. But you get to a point sometimes when you're spinning your wheels and you make a decision. I'm not out to make a million dollars, but I will be doing something I've always wanted to do. I'll be lowering my overhead, slowing down my pace, and I believe that if I bring interesting things here, people will come."

Morgan was born in Suffern, New York, where she lived until her family moved to Stuart, Florida, when she was five. She spent a pleasant childhood with her parents and her two siblings, enjoying the beach, hiking, and making frequent trips to her grandparents in the Berkshires, which exposed her to museums like the Clark Art Institute and the Williams College Museum of Art. At Brevard College (near Asheville, where she met her husband, Brett), Morgan studied studio art, but she later transferred to Florida State University and switched her focus to art history. She got her B.A. and became a curatorial assistant at Eaton Fine Arts in West Palm Beach. She stayed for five years, working up to associate director and learning how to run a small, lively business: how to put on shows, produce catalogues, be a registrar and curator.

It was all good, but at 25, she was "tired of Florida" and decamped to Atlanta for a year. "I was biding my time, but I needed to be in New York City. Finally, I saw a job post from Yancey Richardson. I applied and pretended I was on my way to New York City. She called and said 'can you be here tomorrow?' I flew up and back on a Tuesday to interview with her. Luckily, she offered me the job."

That was in 2004, and over the course of the next six years, Richardson was the perfect mentor for Morgan as she worked her way up to assistant director, making sales and forging relationships with artists like Andrew Moore and Laura Letinsky that have lasted until today. After six years, Morgan left to work at several other galleries, including Pace/MacGill, Barry Friedman, and Andrea Meislin, where she was director.

TRACEY MORGAN GALLERY

188 COXE AVENUE ASHEVILLE NC 28801 828.505.7667 TRACEYMORGANGALLERY.COM



But Morgan and her husband finally wanted out of the daily stresses of New York. They looked to Asheville, and Morgan found a spot in the semi-industrial area of South Slope, where she'll show work by McNair Evans, the Guggenheim Grant winner whose portrait of the insolvency of his family's business, *Confessions for a Son*, was set in nearby locales, alongside local artists, as well as emerging and mid-career New York artists like Nick Hall and Sharon Loudon. "I don't want to alienate anyone. A lot of the work that I'll show here will be new to people, but then again," says Morgan, "so am I. Somehow, I envision it all working out perfectly."

ARCHIVES - ISSUES