Karen Knorr (Frankfurt am Main, Germany 1954) is a North American artist who grew up in Puerto Rico in the 1960’s and finished her studies in Paris and London. Knorr has exhibited worldwide and her works are in many collections including Tate Gallery, London, Pompidou Museum, Paris. She won the V Pilar Citoler International Photography Prize of Photography in 2010 and her work was recently exhibited in the Minsheng Museum of Art, Shanghai, China in an exhibition: Work, Rest and Play: British Photography from the 1960’s to Today, curated by Brett Rogers (OBE, Director of the Photographers’ Gallery, London). Karen Knorr is currently Professor of Photography at the University for the Creative Arts, Farnham, Surrey, U.K.

In the 1970’s, Karen Knorr settled in England where she began to make work that engaged with contemporary debates pertaining to the ‘politics of representation’. Knorr explored themes that ranged from the investigation of the lifestyle and aspiration of privileged elites in the series Belgravia 1979-1981 to the patriarchal conservative values of clubs in Saint James in the series Gentlemen 1981-1983.
In the 1980’s and 1990’s her work addressed power, class, national identity underlying British and European heritage. (Connoisseurs 1986-1990, Academies 1993- 2005) Her work developed a critical and playful dialogue with documentary photography using different visual and textual strategies to explore such themes as high art culture, education and taste (aesthetics) to museology and the representation of the animal within the museum context.

Her series Fables from 2000’s explored the space between reality and illusion, analogue and digital photography blurring these perceptual categories by the digital introduction of animals dead and alive into sumptuous museum spaces and places in France including the Carnavalet Museum and Chambord Castle.

India Song (2008 - 2015 ) which we are currently showing Slow Track, explores the presence and disappearance of animal life and its representation in Indian art (miniatures, paintings and murals) and its relationship to myth and story of the Indian origin stories in the rapidly changing India of today. Since her first trip to Rajasthan which changed her life, Karen Knorr refers to non Western iconographies inspired by the hybridity she found in northern India (a mixture of Jain, Hindu and Muslim,Greek and folk culture).

The artist photographed secular and sacred spaces referring to such social themes of caste, femininity and power using animals to draw parallels allegorically. Photographing wild animals in zoos, parks, cities and reserves, they are inserted digitally into royal palaces, temples and mausoleums transforming them into characters found in the Indian stories (Ramayana and Panchatantra).
On her numerous trips back she reinterpreted the myths and stories of Rajput, Moghul and Hindu culture found in heritage sites and palaces across India (Karnataka, Maharastha, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Orissa). Karen Knorr continues to travel and return to India exploring new avenues.

After *Fables* and *India Song*, Karen Knorr is preparing a new series (which Slow Track will be showing in the future) she has photographed in Japan called *Monogatari*, referencing Ukiyo-E prints of the floating world. Animals and women appear against gorgeous golden painted screens in Buddhist temples in Kyoto. Japanese animals appear in sanctuaries and temples referencing popular stories and the supernatural.

Quentin Bajac, curator of photography at MOMA writes about her 1980's work in a catalogue essay published by the collection Ojo que Ves: "This shift in the text from one series to the next - from the perspective of the collective, from the sociological to the historical and thence to the transcendent, from an examination of the individual forming a structure to the examination of the structure itself - is equally in the composition of the photographs…. the individual gradually vanishes in favour of the space and the objects that surround him."

The curator of Karen Knorr’s retrospective en Puerta Nueva, Cordoba (2012), Alfonso de la Torre explains: “Knorr succeeds in undermining appearances, sweetly but without mercy, and in creating - with commonality as her starting point - a new space in which an unexpected fullness unfolds, a kind of epiphany that transfigures the commonplace.”