

Mary Cassatt, Alice Neel, Karen Kilimnik: Painted Faces

From the Foreword by Lisa Melandri

Mary Cassatt, Alice Neel, and Karen Kilimnik may at first seem strange bedfellows, but from intimate glimpses of nineteenth-century women to brutal portraits of art-world players and a fanzine depiction of pop culture super-stars, each has created portraits that express her unique artistic voice and, in so doing, reveal her time. Philadelphia has long been a place from which great portraiture has emerged, and the work of these native artists confirms that. In a span of three succeeding generations, Cassatt (1844–1926), Neel (1900–1984), and Kilimnik (b. 1955) have produced powerful and varied oeuvres; their portraits offer the perfect vehicle through which to examine identity—and its fluid definition—over the last century.