

Linda Cummings
Paul Sharpe Contemporary Art

By LILY FAUST

Tossing a slip into the air and photographing it, while it falls, Cummings weaves together diverse associations; the slip, a sexually charged item loaded with issues of gender and identity, the act of falling, itself, a moment of release and the ghostly image of an unfettered spirit in flight. In Cummings' earlier series, which utilized male dominated backgrounds such as sports arenas and coal mines, the work was more identifiable, with gender discussions specific to the topic.

In this series of black and white photographs, Cummings has in effect neutralized the broader implications of the slip. Transformed into a poetic abstraction, it reads as a white element in a black and white composition. Caught momentarily by the camera's eye in the blur of falling, at times the barely recognizable slip appears like a winged bird; an apparition set against a mysterious landscape.

In *Lumen* (2001), the slip emerges between the clouds, as if to signify the biblical vision of a virgin birth; the silvery clouds floating in an otherwise dark sky. The landscape below is blurred into existence; it appears to be the calm surface of a lake, reflecting clouds above. In its transformation from slip to bird, to ghost-like apparition, to lyrical abstraction; the subject matter of these images seems destined to continue to evolve beyond all recognition. ♦



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Linda Cummings *Lumen*, 2001, Silver Gelatin Print
40 x 27 inches
Courtesy: Paul Sharpe Contemporary Art, New York