

# GAYLETTER

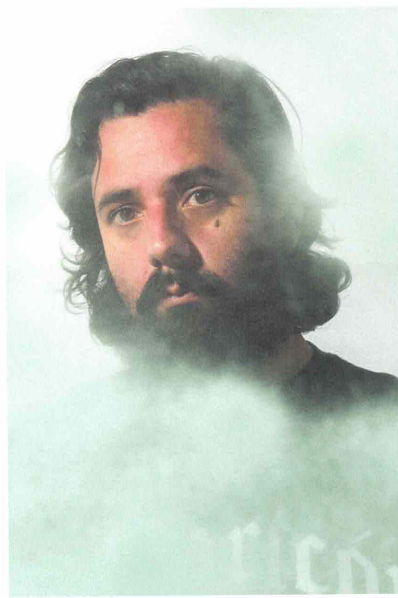
ISSUE 14

## MARK McKNIGHT



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK McKNIGHT  
TEXT BY TYLER AKERS

ART



*Mark McKnight photographed in Los Angeles. March, 2021.*

While naked outside the privacy of the boudoir, a revitalizing magic often happens—especially when gaily accompanied. Mark McKnight's photographs are able to conjure the ecstasy of dirty feet and clean air. Richly articulated in black and white, their figures seem to brawl and fuck with the same intensity they piss and breathe. No obvious narrative is to be found; they are powerful in their immediacy. The images elicit the timelessness of our blazing sun cast onto morning dew, of glittering grasses sparkling in a gentle wind, of roaming clouds and the passing shadows they cast.

McKnight catches intimate moments of discovery—hands tightly gripping unfamiliar skin in passion and bodies embraced while bathing in the sunlight of a new day. Because of their subtlety, his images do not make any grand statements or critiques, but image after image, they may seem to examine the construct of "nature." If people are part of nature can their actions be unnatural? As Jackson Pollock famously declared, "I don't paint nature, I am nature." By allowing the definition of nature to blur, place and person might be understood as parts of the same thing, each determining the other. McKnight's subject is as much landscape as it is portrait, his photographs affirming the old existential cliché that everything is connected. ■

PORTRAITS BY IAN BYERS-GAMBER

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*A selection of these images are from Mark McKnight's  
"Heaven is A Prison," available via Loose Joints.*

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