

# M A R T I N   C O O P E R

## T H E   A L T I S

For more than one thousand years, ancient Greek males celebrated the Olympic games at the altis, a sacred site at the base of Mt. Olympus. The games were a religious rite performed in the nude, and women were banned from participating. Failure to comply was a crime punishable by death. *The Altis, Portraits of the Immortals*, defies the ancient archetype to exalt women to their rightful place in the world. Presented through the discipline of classic portraiture, *The Altis* is a portal into an aesthetic and highly stylized world, glorifying women. The portraits showcase the beauty in athleticism and the pageantry of the rituals they were denied. Through the athlete's inner absorption and near religious devotion to her sport, she becomes the ultimate practitioner, a metaphor of transcendence into the immortal. The artist's pursuit is the capture of these pivotal moments.