

# MITCHELL-INNES & NASH

**JUSTINE KURLAND:** *Girl Pictures, 1997-2002*

534 West 26<sup>th</sup> Street, New York

May 24 – June 29, 2018

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 24 from 6 to 8 pm



**NEW YORK**, February 27, 2018 – Mitchell-Innes & Nash is honored to present *Girl Pictures, 1997-2002* by Justine Kurland. On view at the gallery's Chelsea location on the occasion of the project's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, this exhibition is the first presentation of the artist's complete first printing of the *Girl Pictures*; the series is comprised of sixty-nine vintage prints. The gallery will publish a limited edition monograph by the same name to accompany the exhibition with an essay by the artist. This is Justine Kurland's fourth solo show with the gallery.

The works on view were made as Kurland drove across the United States and span a period of five years between 1997 and 2002. Beginning in New Haven, where she was completing her graduate studies, the photographs cover a range of settings from the dystopian non-place of a roadside truck stop to the dreamlike landscape of an Arcadian meadow. The primary subject of Kurland's pictures, however, are the adolescent girls who inhabit these places, both familiar and uncanny, captured by the artist's camera. The fact that Kurland's pictures are carefully staged seems to contradict their intimate, candid quality. Speaking about her work, Kurland has said that she constructs pictures in order to let them unravel, working along a "spectrum between the perfect and the real."

Productive conflicts, often alluringly elusive, abound in Kurland's work. There is, for one, the push and pull between nature and culture, as evidenced by images like *Play Mountain* (2000) where rolling green hills, which at first glance look curiously manicured, are actually manmade vestiges of a landfill. In his *New York Times* review of the artist's first solo exhibition in New York in 1999, Ken Johnson notes that the "particular appeal of Ms. Kurland's work is in its deadpan tension between the matter of fact and the mythic." This balancing act is mirrored in the artist's own life; indeed, Kurland has noted the autobiographical parallels in her work, specifically her competing desires to both escape and fight back; to document and allegorize; and to capture "vaporous abstractions" like the carefree freedom of her "runaway girls."

## About Justine Kurland

Justine Kurland (b. 1969, Warsaw, New York) is known for her utopian photographs of American landscapes and the fringe communities, both real and imagined, that inhabit them. A lifelong nomad, Kurland takes photographs during cross-country journeys that reveal the double-edged nature of the American dream. She presents a reality where utopia and dystopia are not polar opposites, but rather fold together in an uneasy co-existence. For her most recent exhibition at Mitchell-Innes & Nash, *Sincere Auto Care* (2014), Kurland returned to a purely documentary style in the tradition of Walker Evans, exploring two competing narratives: the car as an aspirational symbol of freedom, sex, the American Dream, and the bleaker daily life behind the scenes.

The artist received her BFA from School of Visual Arts, New York in 1996, and her MFA from Yale University in 1998. Her work has been exhibited extensively at museums and galleries in the United States and internationally. Museum exhibitions have included *Autophoto* at the Fondation Cartier in Paris (2017); *The Open*

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*Road* at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville (2016); *Into the Sunset: Photography's Image of the American West* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2009) and *Role Models: Feminine Identity in Contemporary American Photography* at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. (2009). Kurland was also the focus of a solo exhibition at CEPA in Buffalo, NY (2009). Her work is in the public collections of institutions including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Guggenheim Museum, New York; the International Center of Photography, New York; the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C.; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal.

## About Mitchell-Innes & Nash

Founded by Lucy Mitchell-Innes and David Nash, who previously headed the worldwide Contemporary and Impressionist & Modern Art divisions of Sotheby's, Mitchell-Innes & Nash places exemplary contemporary artists within a historical context, revealing a continuity of ideas and aesthetic virtuosity from the Modern era through the present day.

Mitchell-Innes & Nash's renowned exhibition program, in both their Madison Avenue and Chelsea locations, fosters excellence within artistic practice, while forging an informed dialogue between emerging and established internationally recognized artists. From acclaimed surveys of 20th century masters, such as Jean Arp, Anthony Caro, Jay DeFeo, Willem de Kooning, Leon Kossoff, Kenneth Noland, Roy Lichtenstein, and Nicolas de Stael, to solo exhibitions of Sarah Braman, Keltie Ferris, Daniel Lefcourt, Pope.L, Martha Rosler, and Jessica Stockholder, Mitchell-Innes & Nash has proven expertise in both advancing the careers of emerging artists and maintaining the superior standard set by established artists.

Caption: Justine Kurland, [Broadway \(Joy\)](#), 2001, C-print, 12 by 15 in. 30.5 by 38.1 cm.

## Listings Information:

Mitchell-Innes & Nash is located at 534 West 26th Street in Chelsea and 1018 Madison Avenue on the Upper East Side. Tel: 212 744 7400 | Web: [www.miandn.com](http://www.miandn.com) | Email: [josie@miandn.com](mailto:josie@miandn.com)

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