

NEWS RELEASE

Exhibition: *Airless Spaces*, Justine Kurland and Bruce Kurland

Dates: July 11 – August 31, 2018

Higher Pictures presents *Airless Spaces*, a two-person exhibition featuring new photographs by Justine Kurland and paintings by Bruce Kurland. Justine Kurland's 4-by-5-inch contact prints and Bruce Kurland's intimately scaled still lifes fashion interior worlds out of exterior objects. Taken together, the two bodies of work make a new kind of family album, one comprised of unusual relics that provide continuity between father and daughter.

Bruce Kurland's compositions reference seventeenth-century Dutch painting, in which each object is imbued with symbolic meaning. But his combinations are unnerving and unexpected: flowering branches draped with two raw strips of bacon, a whole trout perched limply on a wood block, deconstructed birds—all memorialize nature, red in tooth and claw. Often sitting on top of impossibly cantilevered shelves, constructed from layers of paint applied and then scraped away, the scenes feel in danger of collapsing or dissolving entirely.

Justine Kurland's photographs are the first she has exhibited since selling her van four years ago and renouncing the road trips she is known for. The work on view returns to her apartment in New York City, her hometown of Fulton, New York, and her mother's home in rural Virginia. Kurland invaginates fragments of this life (her cat, lovers, a bloodied tampon) with allusions to the work of Carolee Schneemann, Betty Tompkins, Judy Chicago, Hannah Wilke, and Emily Roysdon. Photographs of her father's paintings—a diminutive self-portrait wearing a pot as a hat, a likeness of Kurland's mother, and his last self-portrait—appear in her work, linking three disparate interiors and three stages of life gone by.

An artist's zine by the same name is available through the gallery.

Bruce Kurland (1938–2013) studied at the Arts Students League and the National Academy School of Fine Arts in New York City. A retrospective of his work, *Bruce Kurland: Insight into Still Life*, was organized by the Burchfield Center for Western New York Art in 1983. His work is held in the collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.

Justine Kurland (b. 1969) studied at the School of Visual Arts and Yale University. Her work has been on view in recent exhibitions at Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York, Whitechapel Gallery, London, and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas. Her work is in the public collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal, Canada; the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, among others.

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