

NEWS RELEASE

Exhibition: Justine Kurland: *This Train*, 2005–2011

Dates: January 24 – March 23, 2024

Opening: Saturday, January 27, 2024, 4pm – 6pm

Higher Pictures presents Justine Kurland: *This Train*, 2005–2011. The exhibition coincides with the monograph of the same title published by MACK books, available in March 2024. This is the artist's third exhibition with the gallery.

Kurland's life on the road began as a child. Her mother and siblings would travel up and down the East Coast to make a living selling crafts at Renaissance fairs. Long before cell phones and our modern "van life" era, Kurland inherited certain types of knowledge: how to get by in a nomadic mode, how to build out a livable van and how to raise children on the journey. So when Kurland took to the road to hone her own craft she mirrored much of what she had learned from the family business. Unfettered by the social constructs that dominate and define the norms of family; from pregnancy through the first decade of her child's life, they traversed America together with a 4x5 camera.

In 2005 when her toddler expressed a love for trains Kurland followed, picturing their roaming home as a family album and juxtaposing it with the train's dominance in the landscape. Forming a parallel track, each framed work in *This Train* contains two back-to-back photographs, one appearing in plain sight and the other about-face. Throughout the duration of the exhibition, upon the viewer's request, the gallery will reveal the hidden sides.

While the work is seen as participating in the American tradition of road photography, this exhibition highlights the shadow narrative. As Lily Cho writes in *This Train*, Kurland's work "captures the ghostly remainders at the ragged edges of myth and triumph," offering "a fantasy that works against fantasy." In the seeming stillness of these images, the photographer denounces the myth of conquest over nature. At the same time, the work engages a dichotomy of our construction of family—the opposition between home and road, domesticity and journey, staying and seeking. Between these threads, Kurland reappraises an interwoven set of paradigms which retain a tenacious grip on contemporary American life. By placing these myths side by side, Kurland's images capture a life somewhere in between.

Justine Kurland (b. 1969) studied photography at the School of Visual Arts and Yale University. In 2023 a solo exhibition of *Girl Pictures*, 1997-2002, was on view at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford CT. Recent exhibitions include *SCUMB Manifesto*, Watershed Art & Ecology, Chicago (2023); *Bonds of Love* (with Moyra Davey), delpire & co, Paris (2023); and *Bruce Kurland & Justine Kurland – Two Worlds: Illusion & Document*, the University of Buffalo (2022). Her work was included in the 2020 *Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie*, Mannheim, Germany; *Our Selves: Photographs by Women Artists from Helen Kornblum*, MoMA; and *To Begin Again: Artists and Childhood*, ICA Boston (both 2022). She is represented in the permanent collections of the Morgan Library & Museum; the Museum of Modern Art; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC; the Museum of Fine Art, Houston TX; the Philadelphia Museum of Art, among others. Publications include *SCUMB Manifesto* (MACK Books, 2022); *The Stick* (TIS books, 2021); and *Justine Kurland: Girl Pictures* (Aperture, 2020).

For more information please contact the gallery at office@higherpicturesgeneration.com.