

## Justine Kurland

### *He sleeps where he falls*

Exhibition from April 2nd to May 4th, 2011 Tuesday-Saturday 11am-7pm

Opening on Saturday, April 2nd

Galerie Frank Elbaz is pleased to announce *He sleeps where he falls*, Justine Kurland's first solo exhibition at the gallery.

In this series, photographed during a nine-month road trip, living in a van with her 6-year-old son, Justine Kurland focuses on nomadic subcultures: train-hoppers, hitchhikers, wilderness squatters, wayfarers, and drifters. Her work draws upon the nineteenth-century landscape tradition of depicting a perfect place. The photographs are narratives gleaned from America's dream of itself: a collective identity based on firm faith in the inalienable right to freedom. These images are portals into the not quite real yet not quite fictional realm of the American frontier.

The pastoral and utopian themes explored in her earlier work are here cut with a new sense of urgency, borne straight out of the struggle to leave home because it did not feel like home, to go it alone, to give up what society has to offer, to say "fuck you" to parents, God, and country. A forbidding realism and an increasingly matter-of-fact quality in Kurland's new work has subsumed the earlier nostalgia for edenic nature. It forces whatever rarified traces of idealism that remain into stark relief — like a child's fragile toy in the carbon-colored landscape of a geologic catastrophe, or a tree-dappled ray of light being dissolved by the unruliness of young man's beard.

Of course, in a larger sense, the struggle is the artist's own, as she too has realized the necessity of a nomadic life to the lifeblood of her art.

Justine Kurland was born in 1969 in Warsaw, New York. She lives and works in New York, USA.

She received her B.F.A from School of Visual Arts, NY in 1996, and her M.F.A. from Yale University in 1998.

Her work has been exhibited extensively at museums and galleries in the U.S. and internationally. Recent museum exhibitions have included : **2009** : *Into the Sunset: Photography's Image of the American West*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA ; CEPA GALLERY, Buffalo, New York, USA (solo) ; **2008** : *Role Models: Feminine Identity in Contemporary American Photograph*, National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C., USA.

Her work is in the public collections of institutions including the Whitney Museum, the Guggenheim Museum, and the ICP, all in New York; the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, DC; and the Museum of Fine Arts in Montreal.

She is represented by Mitchell-Innes & Nash and galerie Frank Elbaz in Paris.