

For Immediate Release:

Animals
Ryan McGinley
02 May - 02 June 2012
83 Grand Street

Team is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by New York-based artist Ryan McGinley. Entitled *Animals*, the show will run from May 2nd through June 2nd, 2012. Team Gallery is located at 83 Grand Street, between Wooster and Greene, on the ground floor. Concurrently, our 47 Wooster Street space will house *Grids*, an additional solo show by McGinley culled from an entirely different body of work. This marks the first time a single artist has had simultaneous shows in our two spaces.

Animals consists of McGinley's color studio portraits of live animals with nude models. The exhibition is his first made up exclusively of selections from this growing, and ambitious, body of work. The artist visited various sanctuaries, zoos, and rescue establishments across the United States, erecting a mobile studio wherever possible and working with a number of pre-eminent animal trainers. The animals are not mere props in photographs of people; on the contrary, McGinley considers them the subjects of these images. There exists both tension and tenderness between the models and wild animals, as they claw, clutch, nibble, and hug one another.

This body of work has two starkly contrasting sides, epitomized by two of the photographs on view. In the comical *Dakota (Marmoset)*, a tiny monkey hangs from a male model's pubic hair, partly obscuring his genitals. The human legs and torso are brutally covered in scratches and the marmoset stares directly at the camera, wearing an expression of apparent shock. In *Parakeets*, a flock of lushly colored birds tears across a blue background while a girl, face obscured by a blurred green and white wing, stretches out her arms in an imitation of flight. The barroom roughhouse of the former and dulcet elegance of the latter act as the exhibition's counterweights. Where the first piece is grotesque and lascivious, as humorous as it is horrifying, the other — a gushing moment of poetic beauty — strikes a profound emotional and visual harmony.

These photographs are studies in animal bodies, their strangeness and seductivity. As a collection, they highlight the similarities and differences between the various species' anatomies, the familiarity and relative regularity of the human form providing a blank slate against which to read the animals. The Pop art attitude generated through the use of candy-colored backgrounds serves to make the images all the more attractive, introducing an internal tension between their initially inviting appearances and the sometimes off-putting subject matter. These colors, in tandem with the improbable relationships between the animals and people, situate the photographs firmly within the province of the surreal and psychedelic.

Wild animals add a strong element of unpredictability to the traditionally more controlled context of studio photography. McGinley often gives light direction to his models, but animals do not heed such instruction. Though he devises each situation, choosing and pairing animals and models with variously colored backdrops, perhaps suggesting an initial position, the images are never pre-mediated: he allows the interactions to unfold naturally, photographing the outcome. McGinley's approach to his work blurs the lines separating private and public, nature and studio, staged and documentary. In much the same spirit with which he has imposed the studio upon the wild — employing cinematic lighting in his recent outdoor photography — he has introduced the wild into a type of studio setting.

McGinley's photographs are included in the collections of The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington D.C., and many others. The 34 year-old artist has had solo exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of Art and at PS1 in New York, at the MUSAC in Spain, and at the Kunsthalle Vienna. Last year McGinley had solo shows in London and Amsterdam. Earlier this year a monograph on his work was released by Twin Palms Press. May 2012 will also see the release of a long-awaited book surveying his career from 1999 through the present. Published by Rizzoli, the book contains essays by Chris Kraus and John Kelsey, as well as an interview with Gus Van Sant.

Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 6pm. For further information and/or photographs, please call 212 279 9219.