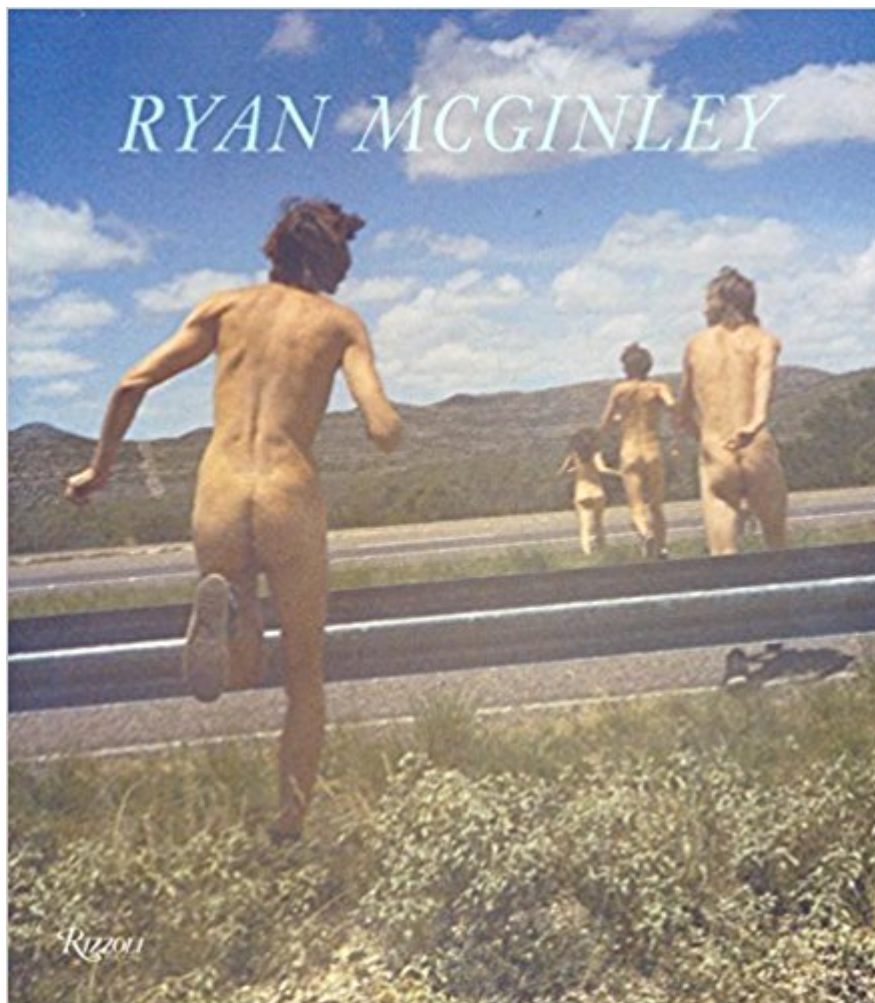


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Ryan McGinley: Whistle For The Wind



Synopsis

In 2000, Ryan McGinley, then a student, staged his first exhibition of photographs in an abandoned SoHo gallery. To coincide with the show, the artist created several handmade books featuring a sampling of his work entitled *The Kids Are Alright*. A copy eventually found its way into the hands of Sylvia Wolf, then a curator of photography at the Whitney Museum of American Art. In 2003, Wolf mounted an exhibition of his work at the venerable institution, the youngest artist to ever have a solo show at the museum. What Wolf recognized—and what other critics, curators, and collectors would quickly discover—was an artist who understood and chronicled his own generation (habitués of New York City's downtown) as no artist had before him. McGinley had managed to capture the hedonistic adventures of youth culture—kids hanging out and enjoying life—but without the dark underbelly of earlier artists who mined similar themes. As the work evolved, he moved away from the more documentary aspect of the early photographs and began to create scenarios where he could explore different ideas (aesthetic and otherwise). This eventually led to the now legendary summer-long road trips, capturing groups of twenty-somethings amongst a variety of American landscapes. In his most recent body of work, McGinley continues to explore—in black and white as well as in color—the body but in the still, pared down atmosphere of his studio. In this first major monograph chronicling the entirety of the artist's career, McGinley's work is considered by three extraordinary figures: Chris Kraus, novelist and critic; John Kelsey, writer, artist and activist; and Gus Van Sant, the auteur filmmaker. Each attends through the lens of their own rich insights to various aspects of the artist's work and creative process, offering in-depth and unique perspectives on McGinley's work and import.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The book's presentation matches the weightlessness of the content: the images are gifted ample breathing space and the print is finished to an extraordinary degree of quality." ~Sleek Magazine "Ryan McGinley is without a doubt the defining photographer of this generation. His forthcoming monograph, *Ryan McGinley: Whistle for the Wind*, solidifies his impact in art and culture." ~Complex.com "For viewers who get past the casual nudity and low-fi aesthetic, there's plenty of unexpected beauty and youthful ebullience." ~American Photo "These photographs are songs of innocence." ~New York Times "Nothing conjures up feelings of summer adventure like a photograph by Ryan McGinley." ~Nylon Guys "Ryan McGinley's photographs capture the essence of being twenty-something in America |chronicles the entirety of McGinley's career." ~Cultured Magazine

Chris Kraus is the author of four novels, most recently *Summer of Hate* (2012) and two books of art criticism. She writes frequently about visual and literary culture for *Art in America*, *Artforum*, *May Revue*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, and other publications. The recipient of a Warhol Foundation Arts Writing grant, she has published essays and monographs on contemporary artists including Jorge Pardo, Moyra Davey, Elke Krystufek, *Tiny Creatures*, *The Bernadette Corporation*, among many others. With Richard Birkett and Marco Vera, she organized the Artists Space exhibition "Radical Localism" of Media and Art from the Pueblo Nuevo Gallery Mexicali Rose in 2012. She teaches writing at European Graduate School. John Kelsey is a writer, artist, and activist based in New York City. He is a member of the collective *Bernadette Corporation* and co-founder of the gallery *Reena Spaulings Fine Art*. His texts on contemporary art have appeared frequently in *Artforum*, where he is a contributing editor. He is the author of *Rich Texts: Selected Writing for Art* (Sternberg Press, 2010). Gus Van Sant is a filmmaker, writer, artist and musician. His films include *Drugstore Cowboy*, *Gerry*, and *My Own Private Idaho*. He was twice nominated for the Academy Award for Best Director in 1998 for *Good Will Hunting* and in 2009 for *Milk*. His films *Paranoid Park* (2007) and *Last Days* (2005) were both nominated for the

Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or. In 2003 Elephant garnered that prestigious honor and Van Sant received the award for Best Director.

As an avid photographer and a lover of fine art photography for the last 30 years, I wanted to like this book. I have always had a penchant for risqué and provocative photography, leaning towards an overproduced aesthetic, such as that found in the work of fashion photographers like Leibovitz and Newton as well as shock value photographer Dave LaChapelle, and others. Ryan McGinley has garnered much attention in his relatively short career, and the reviews I have read in such esteemed magazines as *Foam* and *Aperture* led me to believe that I would like his work. Unfortunately that was not the case. Yes, he has captured the carefree mindset of youth in their collective rights-of-passage into adulthood, and yes, I always like to see artists working in the medium of film, but this work seemed to evoke equal parts honesty and intentional vulgarity. It is the latter I object to, not because it offends me in the least but because it cheapens the work, IMHO. The layout of the book demonstrates an intent in this regard that makes me scratch my head in puzzlement in the same way that I do when I watch a movie which has a formulaic addition of vulgar language. When the language is used because it is authentic, it doesn't draw attention to itself. But when it is added seemingly to insure that the movie is rated R, it undermines the ability of the movie to stand on its own. So, too, does the same apply to this book. Don't get me wrong, it isn't the subject matter itself that I object to, but rather the divisive use of it merely to shock and to make a statement; a statement which really doesn't need to be made, because the bulk of the work is excellent, even if not exactly to my taste. If this formulaic quality to which I am referring is misplaced or misunderstood, then the fault is mine and I apologize to the artist. But even if every single page of the book is an organic product of the artist's mind (rather than a mixture of art and publicity), the fact that it could be seen as something else is nonetheless a detraction.

Liked the authentic, period looking photography. Feels innocent.

Extremely creative photos of nude men and women ! It was not what I was expecting, but I love it!!

This book is smokin' hot. Ryan McGinley is a god. His work exudes exuberance, joy, electricity. And it is sexy sexy sexy. In an innocently sexy kind of way. If that makes sense. Anyhow... Good stuff! Great book! Highly recommend.--Carl Miller Daniels

Some very beautiful images indeed. I enjoyed the whole book especially the soft and very silent image of Jack. Photography of this quality is not often seen. Ian Haxton.

The Best Fashion Book!

McGinley is a very good photographer, but misses opportunities to make better use of the media. It would be nice to see him control his camera better; however, many of his pieces need the uncontrolled-- like Rilke's Elegies need their "Open." All in all, this is probably going to be an important book for a good while. In future, let's hope McGinley goes a little further.

This is perfect. Ryan McGinley is a young genius, and with this book he gets to show his best sides. The quality of the photos is as you would hope it to be. I can only recommend this item.

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