

P*R*E*S*S R*E*L*E*A*S*E

kim dorland

red deer alberta

Exhibition opens | **Saturday October 21th 6pm**
Exhibition runs | **October 21 - November 25th, 2006**



LOS ANGELES, OCTOBER 10, 2006— HarveyLevineTemporary is pleased to present the work of Kim Dorland. One of Canada's brightest young talents, having been recently named to the 2006 RBC Painting Award shortlist out of over 700 entry's. This is Mr. Dorland's second appearance with the gallery, his work showed at ArtLA earlier this year. Below please find an excerpt from his catalogue to be released this fall. The words written by Christopher Willard.

As much as these works might be left alone and appreciated purely on a formal basis, Dorland ultimately portrays issues of class based social ills. His figures are members of the generation beyond Gen-Y, maybe Gen-iPod without the ability to actually buy the iPods. They are teens enamored by yet abandoned by the media. They know the movies, follow the fashion trends, listen to the music dictated to fit their outré lifestyle, and yet they are disenfranchised by a society of success and destined to pursue broken dreams in barely surviving towns. And so they dress up with no place to go, they meet in the bushes with cans of beer and cigs, they gather to bond and to forget.

Dorland notes his decision to draw upon this past went against the grain of slick trends, but he says, "I knew I had to find my own history and experience. I grew up in this environment and my filter was to remain outside. I was interested in the loner attitude and the places these loners went to obliterate themselves and to drop out of the physical space they inhabited." Dorland transports us to locations where we are forced to peek through the trees, as he once did, from a position on the periphery. Here we observe the contemporary versions of the Bruegelian peasant dances where the loners define themselves by their outside-status community and by their anti-action. But in contrast to Bruegel, Dorland applies no overt judgment or condescension in these depictions, a position he emphasizes by positioning us at or just slightly higher than the eye level of the subjects.

Aesthetic rankings most frequently promote incomparability to the top of the list – we demand newness. And in a way, for all their alikeness and blind following of media induced trends, Dorland's teens are beyond comparison. They share a mutual history and yet they are all unique. It was Leo Tolstoy who said, "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." **(6)** They are each loners who personify the loneliness of Dorland's own teenage years, perhaps of all our teenage years.

We place our eye to the peephole Dorland has created in order to expose an aspect of North America that we neither ask to see nor wish to dwell upon, and yet once we begin viewing, we are compelled to watch and acknowledge its existence. Dorland reminds us there is an engaging reality on the other side of the tracks. Beauty is found in the trailer and underneath the bridge. And we continue to view, just as we do a show like *Jerry Springer*. We may be appalled or we may snicker; either way we also understand that by looking at the edges of humanity's river, we see more clearly its mainstream aspects.

Paintings of animals are also part of Dorland's oeuvre. We discover a six-legged wolf -- a lobo-loner destined to perhaps hunt Dorland's recurring two-headed deer. Some might classify these animals as freaks, oddities of the natural world. (Some might classify the teens of Dorland's paintings using the same language.) The penultimate example in this regard is Dorland's paintings of Bigfoot. He is fascinated with the myth of Bigfoot. He follows accounts of sightings and he frequently checks out websites devoted to the thing. He knows Bigfoot is a fraud but he remains transfixed by the way people continue to believe that such a creature exists. The thing exists without completeness, existing within an area not quite disproved but not fully proven either. It struggles between disappearance and recognition. On a deeper level the mythical monster may function for Dorland as the Minotaur did for Picasso, as a metaphor for the artist himself -- silent, lurking, perpetually the outsider, running from the public sphere of full disclosure, and sharing the loneliness common to the studio painter who remains perpetually the outside observer, who examines the world with a meta-critical mind and eye.

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