



## P R E S S R E L E A S E

**KATY GRANNAN**

**The Westerns**

3 January through 9 February 2008

Fraenkel Gallery is pleased to present **The Westerns**, new work by Katy Grannan, on view from January 3rd through February 9th, 2008.

Grannan's large format color portraits depict subjects she describes as "new pioneers," northern Californians who struggle to define themselves under the scrutiny of relentless sunlight. California serves as both a literal and metaphorical backdrop for Grannan's new photographs. It is a mythical destination and a real end-point where sunshine illuminates both the abject and the joyful.

In **The Westerns**, Grannan explores the uneasy relationship between fixed photographic portraiture and her subjects' mercurial identities. The photographs are replete with ambiguity and contradiction: they are evidence of an invented, unknowable self, confronting inescapable photographic description.

Included in **The Westerns** are several individuals with whom Grannan has worked for over three years.

Gail and Dale are two middle-aged transsexuals and best friends whose experience in the world is mediated by romantic escapism and willful delusion. Grannan thoroughly embraces her subjects' vision of themselves, their interpretation of femininity, and the pleasure they derive from gender mimicry and performance. The photographs, however, also address the pair's solitary interior lives and their deeper need to be visible.

Nicole, an elusive and complicated woman, simultaneously reinvents and destroys herself. Grannan's shifting photographic approach mirrors Nicole's ever-changing persona, her defiance, and her near self-annihilation. Here, Grannan questions photography's ability to describe a complex individual with a single photographic "truth."

All of Grannan's subjects are like treasures, or hallucinations. They are preserved and re-presented and, in these photographs, become something other than what they were. Oscar Wilde famously stated, "Anyone who disappears can be seen in San Francisco." In these photographs, they appear over and over again.

Katy Grannan lives and works near San Francisco. Her photographs have been exhibited in the 2004 Whitney Biennial and the 2004 Arles Photo Festival. She is a recipient of the 2004 Baum Award for Emerging American Photographers and her work is in the collections of the Guggenheim Museum, New York, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, as well as others.

**The Westerns** is accompanied by an illustrated catalog published by Fraenkel Gallery, Greenberg Van Doren Gallery, and Salon 94. This is Katy Grannan's second solo exhibition at Fraenkel Gallery.

Fraenkel Gallery is located at 49 Geary Street, 4th floor, San Francisco.

Hours are Tuesday through Friday, 10:30 am - 5:30 pm, & Saturday 11:00 am - 5:00 pm.

For further information and press photographs, please contact Daniel Cheek at 415.981.2661 or [dcheek@fraenkelgallery.com](mailto:dcheek@fraenkelgallery.com).