

MUSÉE

VANGUARD OF PHOTOGRAPHY CULTURE

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Exhibition Review: Ryan McGinley at Team Gallery

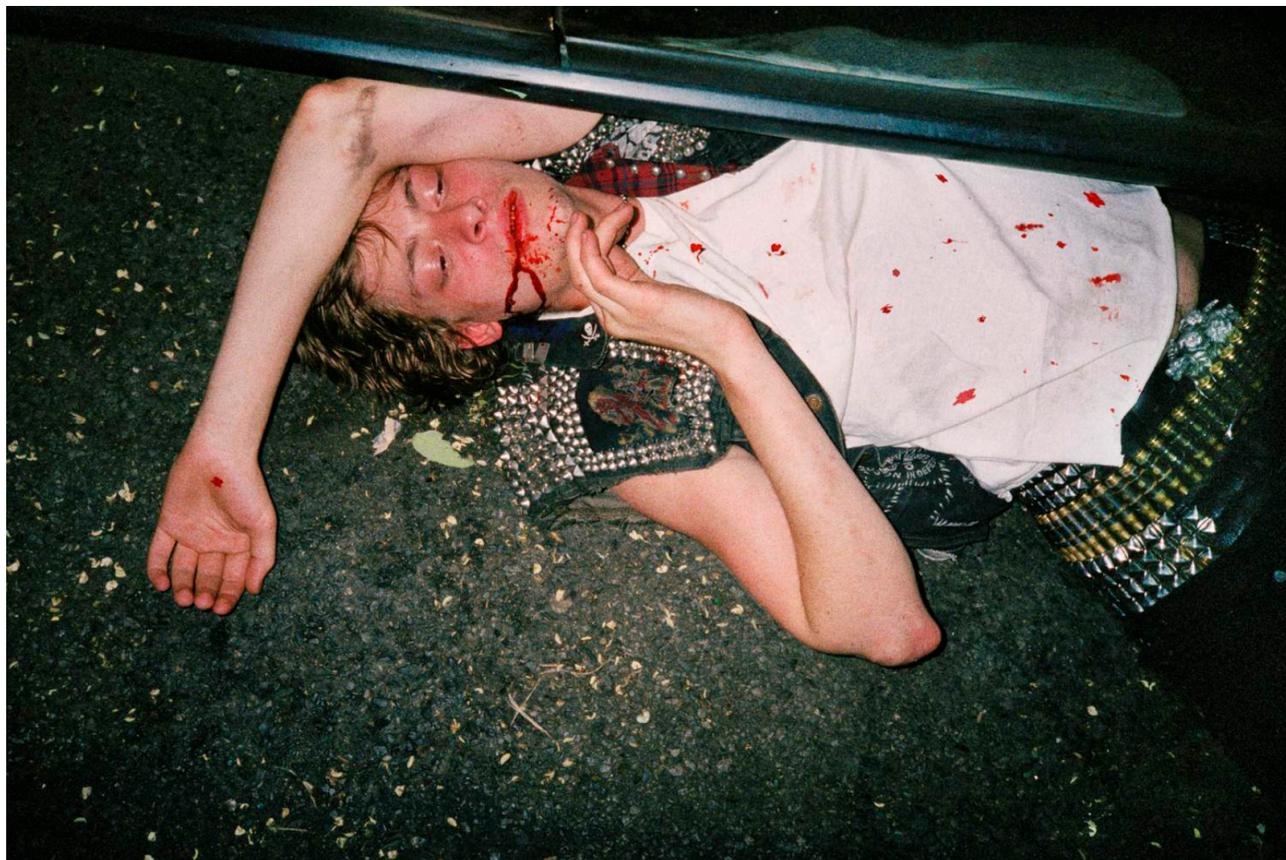
REVIEWS



© *Dash (Manhattan Bridge)*, courtesy of the artist and team (gallery, inc.)

By Baylee McKeel

Howling at you as you walk into the gallery is Ryan McGinley's *Dash (Manhattan Bridge)*. This image starts the show with a loud exclamation, a bright blonde haired man stretching out of the roof of a car, hat in hand and hair swept back by the wind. His face is shining with joy, a lively preface to the photographs to follow, a reminder of the happiness to be found in times defined by hopelessness. This body of work, *Early*, on view at Team gallery through April 1st, was created by McGinley in New York City from 1999 to 2003. This period marked the onset of the Bush era, 9/11, and the struggles of a nation simultaneously mourning and rebuilding.



© *Jake (Bloody Brain)*, courtesy of the artist and team (gallery, inc.)

His photographs show us his friends, many artist themselves, such as painter Dan Colen, photographer and multi-media collagist Dash Snow, and Kunle Martins (better known by his graffiti moniker Earsnot). In closely intimate and raw photographs, they are laughing, weeping, bleeding, having sex, doing drugs, tagging walls, pissing on streets and being purely and genuinely human. His photograph, *Facial*, is side by side with *East Village Sunrise*, an image of a breathtaking New York sunset. The stunning blue, white, purple, orange, and red melt together against the silhouette of the city. An elegant photograph, it heightens the startling rawness of the unapologetic boy confronting the viewer, forcing us to acknowledge his sexual persona. I was captivated by this set, their proximity striking me as beautiful, intimate, and encapsulating the great highs and lows of life.



© *East Village Sunrise*
courtesy of the artist and team (gallery, inc.)



© *Facial*
courtesy of the artist and team (gallery, inc.)

Against the back wall, *Amy & Eric* depicts a man and woman, both topless, hands grasping their sex. A tattoo on his stomach reads “Love is Strange”, an ironic summarization of both the photograph and the show itself as it celebrates the bizarreness and magnificence of life and love. One image showing a bloodied friend, *Jake (Bloody Brain)* is an arresting photo of a man caught under what appears to be a car, a chilling reminder of the human state. Amidst the joys and sorrows, the brilliant escapades of life are marked by tragedies, as the repercussions of 9/11 hung above McGinley and his friends while they were taking these images.



© *Amy & Eric*, courtesy of the artist and team (gallery, inc.)

A group of four photographs next to one another sum up the show. A naked woman runs across a photo, covering herself with a smile on her face, a man with a red covering over his face hides a laugh with a smirk, another man with a bloody and black eye stares at the camera with a cigarette hanging from his mouth, and a man lays, sensual and uncovered, across a bed. McGinley photographs humanity in all of its states. In a time of desperation he proves that life perseveres, that happiness and misery, intimacy and animosity, love and lust persist.



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