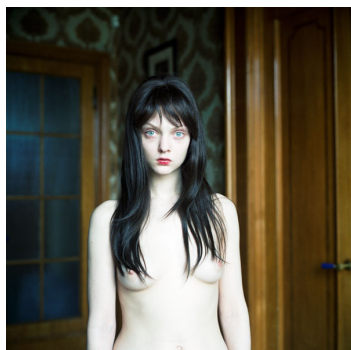


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

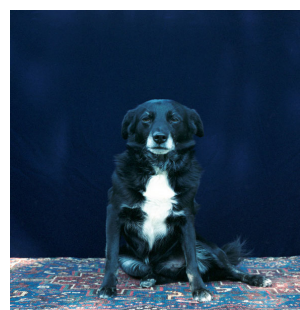
Hellen van Meene
September 8 – October 22, 2011
 Opening Reception Thursday, September 8, 6-8pm



The Yancey Richardson Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Hellen van Meene, continuing the artist's decades-long exploration into photographic portraiture. The exhibition includes several new portraits of adolescent girls, each one characterized by the artist's extraordinary use of light and elicitation of her subject's psychological state. Notably, the selection also includes a series of formal portraits of dogs, a distinctly new direction within the artist's oeuvre. This is van Meene's third solo exhibition at the gallery.

The intimately scaled female portraits in the exhibition were all shot in Russia and in the artist's hometown of Heiloo, The Netherlands. Characteristic of van Meene's style, the portraits reflect an introspective mood, unveiling a moment of acute psychological poignancy. In *Untitled, St. Petersburg* (above), van Meene has returned to a model she previously photographed, whom the artist met in St. Petersburg, Russia in 2007. Formerly a girl in the midst of awkward adolescence, she appears now both physically and psychologically exposed as a nude young woman, bright red lipstick and black wig her only staged adornment. Directly engaging the viewer, the model's coolly blank expression and brilliant blue eyes offer an intriguing glimpse into her psyche.

Van Meene has elsewhere sought to expand her study of photographic portraiture by turning to dogs as subjects. As with her earliest portraits of teenagers, the artist has created an outdoor studio with a simple background in order to focus on the character of each dog and to highlight their idiosyncrasies. Using a navy or crimson backdrop and an antique Persian carpet, van Meene imbues the dogs with a measure of rank and respect, while drawing out of them the same psychological potential as her human portraits.



Born in Alkmaar, The Netherlands in 1972, Hellen van Meene lives and works in Heiloo, The Netherlands. Her work has been exhibited internationally and is held in the collections of major museums worldwide including the Stedelijk Museum, Victoria & Albert Museum, Art Institute of Chicago, Brooklyn Museum, MoCA Los Angeles, Museum of Photography, The Hague, Guggenheim Museum, New York and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Previous publications include *Hellen van Meene: Portraits* (Aperture, 2004) and *Hellen van Meene: Japan Series* (The Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago and De Hallen, Haarlem, the Netherlands, 2002)

For visuals, please contact Walker Waugh at wwaugh@yanceyrichardson.com.