

# JONATHAN LEVINE GALLERY

## In Praise of Rust

*Kevin Cyr*

Solo Exhibition

May 19—June 16, 2012

Opening Reception: Saturday, May 19, 7—9pm

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NEW YORK, NY (April 3, 2012)** — Jonathan LeVine Gallery is pleased to announce *In Praise of Rust*, a series of new oil paintings on panel by New York-based artist **Kevin Cyr**, in what will be his first solo exhibition at the gallery.

*In Praise of Rust* features paintings of old vehicles seen on the streets of New York—primarily vans and commercial delivery trucks—covered in graffiti, rust, scratches, scuffs, dents and other marks of distinction. Cyr includes a thorough level of detail in his meticulously rendered portrait-like representations with devoted attention to every imperfection and sign of age. Removing the context of the urban landscape, he places a strong focus on his subjects by isolating them in fields of flat, solid color.

The neglected appearance and utilitarian function of these vans carry a bit of nostalgia. Once ubiquitous in large urban cities, they have now become far more rare, replaced by heavily branded box trucks. In the artist's words, "*painting them is my way of documenting a grit that is slowly disappearing from New York. In a culture where people are lured by the appeal of status-enhancing symbols, I find so much character in derelict vans. I have always been interested in painting vehicles that have defined the evolution of the American landscape.*"

On the subject of his exhibition title, Cyr says "*Rust serves as a good metaphor for this series, a symbol for deterioration and decay. The meaning also changes slightly when used as an adjective, as in: to become 'rusty' or impaired through inaction or disuse.*"

Common themes in Cyr's larger body of work have included mobility, sustainability and self-reliance. Referencing consumer culture and the fuel/energy crisis, these paintings offer a subtle commentary on how rapidly the technology of our generation becomes perceived as obsolete, amid an increasingly unstable and uncertain climate of economical and environmental issues.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

**Kevin Cyr** was born in 1976 in Edmundston, New Brunswick, Canada. He grew up in Madawaska, Maine and received a BFA from *Massachusetts College of Art* in Boston. Cyr is currently based in Brooklyn, New York. His paintings, drawings, sculptures and installations have been exhibited by galleries and museums, internationally. In March 2012, Cyr's work was the subject of an article in *The New York Times*. Cyr was recently interviewed by fellow artist *Dan Witz* for a feature that will appear in the May 2012 issue of *Juxtapoz*, and the May 2012 issue of *NYLON Magazine* will include a story on Cyr, as well.

## ABOUT JONATHAN LEVINE GALLERY

**Jonathan LeVine Gallery** exhibits a genre of work influenced by illustration, comic book art, graffiti, street art and pop culture imagery. We represent a mix of emerging and mid-career artists with an emphasis on cultivating new talent and creating an environment where artists can further develop their work. Since 2005, the first year established in New York, Jonathan LeVine Gallery has remained focused on maintaining its mission of community, and commitment to providing our artists with a nurturing arena for experimentation and discussion. The Gallery is located at 529 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011. Gallery hours are Tuesday—Saturday, 11am—6pm. For more information, please call: 212.243.3822, visit: [www.jonathanlevinegallery.com](http://www.jonathanlevinegallery.com), or email: [info@jonathanlevinegallery.com](mailto:info@jonathanlevinegallery.com).