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**ALEXANDER GRONSKY**

*Pastoral*

JANUARY 25 – MARCH 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014

## ALEXANDER GRONSKY PASTORAL

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*Strogino I*, 2009 Fine Art print, 90 x 110 cm, edition of 5 + 2 AP © Alexander Gronsky / courtesy Polka Galerie.

Polka Galerie is proud to present the latest exhibition by Alexander Gronsky, *Pastoral*.

Born in Tallin in 1980, Alexander Gronsky refers to himself as a landscape photographer. He focuses on vast spaces and studies how local populations are impacted by the surrounding environment.

His first body of work *Less than One* (2006-2009) centered on the sparsely populated and isolated areas of the former Soviet Unions.

He pursued his reflection with *The Edge* (2008-2009), which received the Foam Paul Huf award in 2010 and was exhibited at Polka Galerie that same year. In this series, he explored the snowy fields surrounding Moscow.

Alexander Gronsky's work has the mysterious ability to always tell the story of quiet and lonesome lives without evoking tragedy. His sense of composition, understanding of perspective and command of light are reminiscent of the traditional processes used in contemplative paintings. In this static universe, each object and each subject is an element in an almost dehumanized landscape.

With *Pastoral* (2008-2012), the Estonian photographer sought the perfect world where man and nature are in absolute symbiosis. He explores this quest in the suburbs of Moscow. «I needed to find a space that belonged neither to nature, nor to mankind. A city's periphery is a frontier between the lived-in spaces and chaos, neither urban nor rural, without a specific name.»

In this latest opus, Alexander Gronsky shows Muscovites ability to transform themselves as soon as they leave their city. He thus gives a new definition of the bucolic universe: picnics by the river, meetings between lovers, swimming sessions close to the megalopolis, unorthodox tanning moments. In these scenes, the artist tries to render the menacing and austere shadows of the nearby buildings invisible. Hence, the human beings photographed here seem disconnected from the reality, alluded to in the somber background.

*Pastoral/The Moscow Suburbs* will be published by Contrasto January 25, 2014

To mark the release of his book *Pastoral/The Moscow Suburbs* (publ. Contrasto), Alexander Gronsky will be at Polka Galerie for a book signing Saturday January 25, 2014 between 4 and 6pm.  
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## BIOGRAPHY

Born in Tallinn, Estonia in 1980, Alexander Gronsky currently lives in Riga, Latvia. His photographic practice focuses on landscapes. Abandoned and quiet, they allow the artist to question the impact of environment on local populations.

For *Less than One* (2006-2009), the photographer traveled to the most remote parts of Russia where the population density is inferior to one person per square kilometer. He continued his reflection with *The Edge* (2008-2009), a documentary series in snowy Moscow, where vast and hostile spaces become the theater of histories without drama, those of silent and isolated lives.

After receiving the Foam Paul Huf Award in 2010 for *The Edge*, Alexander Gronsky decided to explore the fringes of megalopolis such as Shanghai, Chongqing and Shenzhen where agitation turns into chaos. *Mountains & Waters* (2011) is a series of large-format diptychs in which the photographer embraces a Chinese understanding of landscapes, less descriptive than intellectual.

*Pastoral* (2008-2012), Alexander Gronsky's latest opus on Russian landscapes received the Aperture Portfolio Award in 2009 and the third prize in the «Daily Life» category of the World Press Award in 2012. For this series, the photographer explored the fallow land and abandon lots of Moscow's periphery.

Represented by Polka Galerie since 2010, Alexander Gronsky has published in several magazines including *Foam*, *Stern*, *Spiegel*, *Art+Auction*.

He will present his ongoing project *Norilsk* will be shown at the RussenKo festival in Paris at the beginning of 2014.



## PRESS IMAGES

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*Strogino I*, 2009

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*Dzerzhinskiy II*, 2009

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*Otradnoye I*, 2009

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*Zapadnoe Biryulevo I*, 2011

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