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**Lucy Levene and Alana Riley**

***WATCH ME!***

Photography

Curator : **Mara Miller**

**Montréal @ Joyce Yahouda Gallery**

May 8 - June 6, 2009

**Lake Placid @ 511 Gallery**

June 27 - August 8, 2009

**New York @ 511 Gallery**

September 10 - October 24, 2009

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The exhibition *WATCH ME!* is being presented jointly by the **Joyce Yahouda Gallery** in Montreal and the **511 Gallery** in Lake Placid and New York City.

Young photographers Lucy Levene (London, U.K.) and Alana Riley (Montreal, Canada) are observers of themselves and their generation who place themselves physically within their photographs while making clear to the viewer that they are also the hands that are holding the cameras (specifically, the remote shutter-releases) and observing these scenes in their lives.

In the series "Marrying-In (Please God By You)" Levene considers the issues of assimilation and exclusion and the impact of the pressure to partner within one's own religious culture on contemporary singles. The artist shoots herself – always in signature t-shirt and jeans – alongside young eligible Jewish men, in their own homes. Each man is portrayed with flat affect and dissociated from both Lucy and the "home" environment.

Alana Riley, in the "Support System" series, aims for a similar reading but uses physical positions of "closeness", with individual men and women, to reference the problem of intimacy and connection in a postmodern society. Where the set-like backgrounds of Levene's potential suitors are filled with the "stuff" of consumer culture and status, Riley's couples touch and hug each other up against white, vacant photographic paper.

Both artists work in large formats, with high-intensity color-saturated prints. Levene and Riley, in varying equations, use themselves as subjects and observers to explore the often slim possibilities for finding love and friendship in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Mara Miller, Curator and Director of the 511 Gallery