

THE GOSS-MICHÆL FOUNDATION

NIGEL COOKE



The Goss-Michael Foundation is pleased to present a solo show by the prominent British artist Nigel Cooke. The exhibition will open to the public on Friday, October 21, 2011 and continue through Saturday, February 18, 2012

The show consists mainly of works that belong to the Goss-Michael collection and local collectors. The exhibition has been created in close collaboration with the artist and, is in fact, one of the most comprehensive shows of Nigel Cooke's work, covering all series of his work up to the present.

The Goss-Michael Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing a forum for contemporary art and with a focus on British Art by presenting exhibitions and programs, aim to educate, engage and inspire young and adult audiences in Texas, the United States and around the world. Earlier exhibitions have featured Tracey Emin, Damien Hirst, Tim Noble and Sue Webster, Sarah Lucas, Marc Quinn, Michael Craig-Martin and Jim Lambie.

Nigel Cooke's paintings construct a dark and melancholic world. At its core, Cooke's work is an allegorical conception of creativity and production as ambivalent human traits, played out in a deeply psychologized landscape populated by disaffected artists, philosophers, and a host of anthropomorphized and dejected foodstuffs.

This band of cultural vagrants are martyrs to the existential melodrama of abstract thought, haunting a tired, post industrial frontier where nature and creative endeavor collide in an illusionistic melting pot that is both landscape and mindscape. These irresponsible characters abandon reason in this place, gleefully and foolishly throwing themselves headlong into the unseen and unknown, producing actions and artifacts that reflect and satirize their hubris and self-absorption.

Throughout all Cooke's work, this sort of foolish characterization embodies a ridiculing of the vanities of artistic production, while at the same time celebrating its creative capacity

for intellectual renewal, visionary thought and self-criticism.

Yet with all the sense of uncertainty and incapacity that Cooke describes in his paintings, their coming to be is the result of his own tireless grappling with the material and conceptual dimensions of painting. Cooke demonstrates a technical faculty and deftness of painterly touch that is at complete odds with the pathetic, hackneyed paintings, books and sculptures created by the subjects and characters, which appear in various guises within the paintings themselves. Cooke's restless intellect has always fed continuous progression, and this exhibition presents an opportunity to survey key points in the developmental phases of Cooke's image making, conceptual structures, and narrative world.

Nigel Cooke was born in Manchester in 1973 and lives and works in London. Cooke was awarded a PhD in Fine Art from Goldsmith's College, London, in 2004, and MA Fine Art from the Royal College of Art, London, in 1997. Nigel Cooke has been the subject of solo museum shows at the Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2007), The Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth (2006), Art Now, Tate Britain (2004), and South London Gallery, London (2006). Paintings by Nigel Cooke are held amongst the most esteemed international collections, including Tate, London; British Council, London; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art; UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Dallas Museum of Art; Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane; and Moderna Museet, Stockholm. A monograph featuring an essay by Michael Bracewell and an interview between the artist and Martin Herbert was published by König Books, London, in late 2010.
