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DANNY FOX

March 27 – May 4, 2019

Berggruen Gallery is pleased to present *Danny Fox: Some Mornings Catch a Wraith*, an exhibition of paintings, drawings, and sculptures by Los Angeles-based, British artist, Danny Fox. This show marks Fox's first solo exhibition with the gallery and will be on view March 27 through May 4, 2019. The gallery will host a reception for the artist on Wednesday, March 27 from 5:00 to 7:00pm.

Danny Fox's most recent body of work presents a vibrant collection of figures – both real and imagined – that comprise a poetic narrative of the artist's surrounding environment coupled with observations of contemporary life. Fox's portraits exude an insightful sense of atmosphere and temperament as they probe intimate moments of humanity, while the artist's own fragile moments of heartache, remorse, and revelation infuse the work with a raw spectrum of emotion that translates to a compelling artistic range. Fox coalesces these moments with a myriad of rich cultural and historical references: Greek mythology, a captain in the French Foreign Legion, Puritan history. Compelling imagery such as a soldier on horseback or a single figure at a bar proposes a contemporary translation of cultural iconography, thus subtly evoking in the art object an enveloping passage of time.

Fox, a self-taught artist, often discovers artistic sources outside his studio in downtown Los Angeles. The site-specific nature of his work not only influences their backdrops and palettes, for the streets and sites he continually encounters also signify what Fox describes as "a wider dimensional landscape, something more spiritual." Characters drawn from urban life shape a narrative that is at once familiar yet obscure, personal yet vague. Throughout this body of work, Fox references his time spent at the Hotel Figueroa – a historic Los Angeles site newly renovated as part of the city's transforming downtown landscape. Characters observed within and around the hotel – guest, bartender, night porter, chef – shape a narrative rooted in the artist's moments of grief, solitude, and contemplation as he both witnesses and engages with the environment around him. An intimacy exists in his portrayal of these figures, while an aura of mystery invites the viewer to ponder the relationship between artist and subject. The relationship is not always apparent, yet the portraits' titles often imply an identity: *Unwanted Guest*, *The Night Porter*, *The Bartender*. Others are more complex, albeit more personal – *To Turn Rotten In The Mind Of A Lover*, *Til Death Do Us Part* – alluding to love and loss, the pain of separation.

Fox's acrylic and pen compositions feature delineated areas of color and a flattening of spatial depth that recall the rich color studies and bold compositional force of early modernists such as Henri Matisse. In particular, while producing these works Fox closely studied the electric palette of Vincent Van Gogh's *Asylum Garden at Arles* (1889). Throughout this body of work, contrasting areas of pure color, textural brushwork, and expressive geometric patterns create an animated pictorial space that blurs the line between representation and abstraction, foreground and background, real and imagined. Subtly embedded throughout the works are poignant non-figurative elements – horses, moons, foliage, a martini glass – that lend the art an anecdotal curiosity. Meanwhile, abstracted figures reveal spatial incongruities and vibrant, non-representational colors that often fuse with the surrounding space, yet their austere expressions and enigmatic body language imbue the works with a complex emotional depth that is raw and provoking, even

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confrontational. Grounded in personal memory, Fox's works thus explore the boundaries between pictorial modes while embracing moments of human experience.

The introspective nature of Fox's work is perhaps most intimately revealed in the artist's paintings of himself, one of which features a serpent weaving through the picture "challenging (his) head every move, casting a shadow over every moment," as Fox describes. He writes, "It's a self-portrait, drinking wine alone at a table, nothing more to say." This self-reflexive essence is subtly embedded throughout the body of work, as several paintings reference Fox's past work in the background. In response to such references, Fox remarks, "I wanted to show what I left behind, I wanted to show you what you weren't looking at and to acknowledge how I got into this room they call 'success.'"

Danny Fox was born in St. Ives of Cornwall, England in 1986. His work has been the focus of numerous exhibitions at international galleries, including the Saatchi Gallery, London; the Zidoun-Bossuyt Gallery, Luxembourg; v1 Gallery, Copenhagen; S/2 Sotheby's, Los Angeles and New York; and the Redfern Gallery, London. Additionally, Fox was the 2017 artist in residence of the Porthmeor Artist Residency Programme. Fox has also been featured in numerous publications, including GQ Magazine, Vice, Galerie Magazine, Interview Magazine, and BLOUIN ARTINFO. The artist lives and works in Los Angeles and London.

Danny Fox: Some Mornings Catch a Wraith, March 27 – May 4, 2019. On view at 10 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA 94105. Images and preview are available upon request. For all inquiries, please contact the gallery by phone (415) 781-4629 or by email info@berggruen.com.

Gallery Hours: Monday – Friday, 10:00am – 6:00pm
Saturday, 11:00am – 5:00pm

About Berggruen Gallery

John Berggruen first opened his pioneering gallery in the spring of 1970 on Grant Avenue in downtown San Francisco. Berggruen Gallery opened in its new 10,000-square-foot space at 10 Hawthorne Street, an historic three-story brick building across from the recently expanded San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, on January 13, 2017. The gallery specializes in contemporary art and 20th-century American and European paintings, drawings, sculpture, and limited edition prints. The gallery exhibits the work of major American post-war artists as well as established and emerging contemporary artists, such as Alicia McCarthy, Julie Mehretu, Richard Serra, Mark Tansey, George Condo, Bridget Riley, and Tauba Auerbach. In addition, Berggruen Gallery presents curated exhibitions of historic works by artists, including those of the Bay Area Figurative movement, such as Richard Diebenkorn, Nathan Oliveira, and David Park, as well as Alexander Calder, Willem de Kooning, Mark di Suvero, Ellsworth Kelly, Henri Matisse, Georgia O'Keeffe, Ed Ruscha, Frank Stella, and Wayne Thiebaud.