

OBLIVIOUS - NEW WORKS BY NIGEL COX

Presented by Coates and Scarry, at Gallery 8, Duke Street, London
Opens 10 November 2014

Nigel Cox's minimalistic oil paintings capture an extraordinary realism. **Oblivious** references the subjects, and our own, frequent obliviousness to the world around us.

Cox is inspired by ordinary people going about their everyday lives and the disassociation from their environment by immersion in routine. He captures their moments unawares.

Cox often paints his figures from a viewpoint where no face is visible and portrays them against a vague, vast, empty landscape. A deliberate move, designed to focus the full attention on the figure. The figures are solitary, confident and calm. They have an inner peace and strength and are at one with their surroundings. The paintings reflect solitude, tranquillity and confidence, giving every day scenes an unexpected and surreal feeling while keeping them solidly within the real world.

The artist's love of large open spaces and lack of clutter is obvious as is his fascination by detail. He's coined the phrase **Photorealistic Minimalism** to describe his work. His paintings provide the viewer with a glimpse beyond the clutter of everyday life, conjuring up notions of escape and peace, offering sanctuary from the frenetic world outside.

Cox's background included a period of time working as a radio officer on ships, and a lucky break came when he was offered a place on **Sir Ranulph Fiennes'** Transglobe Expedition - the first circumnavigation of the globe along the Greenwich Meridian via land, sea and ice. He was later commissioned to paint the first and, so far, only portrait of Sir Ranulph. Cox is also known for his incredible portrait of dance legend **Carlos Acosta**.

Coates and Scarry and Cox will also host a charity private view to benefit the **Terrence Higgins Trust** on Thursday 20 November from 1800 until 2100. A limited edition of two specially selected prints will be released on the night, with all proceeds going to the Trust.

Cox paints primarily in oil on linen, building up thin layers of precise paint, developing depth and detail, and bringing an important warmth to the work. The resulting paintings are smooth to the touch and glow with a subtle inner light and life.

The artist says of one seminal moment in the development of his work:

"While travelling through Liverpool Street Station on a sunny day in 2004 I noticed a girl sitting on a seat in the concourse reading a book. I sat down on the floor against a pillar and photographed her, amazed that no one else noticed how wonderful she looked. For her, the Station no longer existed. She was immersed in her book and was oblivious to everything around her. She had, unwittingly, removed herself from this place, transporting herself elsewhere. I was captivated by how special people can be when removed from the crowd and how wonderful it is to observe them, alone, in this state."

This idea developed in Cox's mind and formulated his signature style.

The show also introduces a new element in Cox's work. He has begun developing the backgrounds, introducing vague, grey fog so prevalent in his early work, to show scenes of modern political turmoil - soldiers, military helicopters emphasizing our common obliviousness to the modern world around us despite being more connected than ever through the internet and social media.

Oblivious - Open from Monday 10th November 2014 until Saturday 22nd November 2014, 1100 until 1900 everyday, at Gallery 8, 8 Duke Street, St James's, London SW1Y 6BN.

Viewing also by private appointment - please call Richard Scarry on 07540 793 264.

Press please contact Abigail Stuart-Menteth, Damson PR, t: 078 555 26 550 or e: abigail@damsonpr.com

Notes to editors:

1. **Press and private preview on Wednesday 12th November 6.00-9.30pm please RSVP to abigail@damsonpr.com.**
2. Coates and Scarry and Nigel will also host a charity private view to benefit the **Terence Higgins Trust** on Thursday 20 November from 1800 until 2100. A limited edition of two specially selected prints will be released on the night, with all proceeds going to the Trust.
3. **Dr Rosemary Gillespie, Chief Executive at Terence Higgins Trust**, said: “We’re thrilled that Coates and Scarry and Nigel Cox have chosen our charity to benefit from this show. The art world has a long history of championing HIV as a cause, and it is great to see this support continuing today. The funds raised through sales of these exceptional prints will help people living with and affected by HIV and sexual ill health.”
4. The **Terence Higgins Trust** is the UK’s largest HIV and sexual health charity with centres across England, Scotland and Wales. The Trust provides information and advice about HIV and sexual health and offers a range of services including sexual health checks, counselling and support groups. www.tht.org.uk
5. Coates and Scarry curate and exhibit internationally groundbreaking shows. Recent exhibitions include Unnatural-Natural History at the Royal West of England Academy in 2012 and Trailblazers at Above Second, Hong Kong in 2013.



OBLIVIOUS II | 36” x 60” | Oil on linen

Oblivious II depicts a girl shopping and messaging friends. She is totally involved in the here and now . . . and oblivious to what is happening around her but also to what’s happening around the world while she goes about her very normal life.



The Striding Shadow | 48" x 48" | Oil on linen

A girl striding towards her destination. Viewed from above showing us an extreme perspective of the girl that is less familiar to us . . . this is accentuated by her shadow that reflects a more familiar profile.



Heisenberg's Apprentice | 36" x 30" | Oil on linen

A young shopper walking down the street in busy London. Removing him from his surroundings gives the figure a positive and confident feeling. Changing the logo on the bag, from a department store branded bag to the 'Golden Moth Chemicals' logo from hit TV series Breaking Bad gives an edge to the painting for those in the know. The title references the TV series also.