

Jonathan Leaman

New Work

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PRESS RELEASE



D'Adieu, 2012-17, Oil on canvas, 67 x 47 inches

These are complex images, filled with thought and feeling. The associations and connections, however, enrich the paintings but do not explain them. In the final analysis, as Leaman comments, "an idea is an idea and a painting is a painting". And these are some of the most accomplished, strange and fascinating of the current age.' Martin Gayford, Jonathan Leaman Catalogue 2017

Jonathan Leaman's work is not for the gentle hearted. Many of his extraordinary paintings tackle the fundamental issues facing the world we live in today whilst others lay out prophetic visions in the world of tomorrow.

On display at Beaux Arts next month will be a collection of new work by the artist. A culmination of five years' work, these are monumental. Violent and bizarre, panoramic dreamscapes contain wild figurative dramas and explode with metaphorical overtones. He executes each with outstanding skill and technique, discipline and attention to detail. They combine extraordinary narrative with surrealist imagery.

The result is the creation of eccentric and enigmatic masterpieces, indifferent to the concerns of modernism. The works have been previously described as 'ludicrous, formidable, hypnotic' and creating a 'powerfully imagined world'.



Stèle, 2012-16, Oil on canvas, 72 x 51 inches

'Stèle is a picture of a hedgerow - a subject, you might think for William Morris or John Ruskin. This is, however, a very curious bit of Cotswold hedge in that it is upright, climbing vertically to the top of the canvas like a column. And trapped within the base, his hands clenched and grey head bowed, is the figure of a man.

This is, then, no ordinary undergrowth. On the contrary, these pictures bring to mind Courbet's phrase, "a real-life allegory" - especially when you discover that the man half buried in all that foliage is the artist himself.' Martin Gayford

One of his aims as a painter is to throw light on human codes, beliefs and behaviour. Through extensive reading and personal experience, he explores many themes like religion, sex, death, chaos and most importantly, the breaking of taboos.

'My whole subject matter is completely permeated by religious overtones. All my reading is religious because it provides a vocabulary. Cubism began with the spiritual, the abstract, and moved towards the material. I start with the material and move towards this God that doesn't exist...religion provides a vocabulary, so does art, the two inextricable.' Jonathan Leaman



Detail: Joy Fall, 2012-17, Oil on canvas, 67 x 47 inches

'Leaman's ability to catch nuances of light and still-life detail with pre-Raphaelite accuracy is a feature of all the work.' John McEwen

Born in London in 1954, Jonathan studied at Camberwell School of Art, London, in the mid 1970's. Jonathan has exhibited in Belgium and the UK. His work can be found in public collections including The Tate Gallery, London and private collections in Belgium, Ireland, Mexico, Switzerland and the UK.



A Jan Steen Kitchen, 1995–6, Oil on canvas
This work belongs to the Tate Collection

On seeing the work, it is no surprise to learn that these paintings take years to complete. One is immediately struck by the tenacity and sheer bloody-mindedness of an artist who can laboriously paint every leaf on a shrubbery without going insane. These intense paintings are quite

obviously the product of someone who whilst having mastered his craft, is obsessive about painting. The work has an immediate impact but there are no quick solutions, easy answers or absolute definites.

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