

## Chester Arnold

### *Mad abundance*

February 21, 2015 – March 28, 2015

Join us for an opening with the artist  
on Saturday, February 21  
from 4:00-6:00 pm



Chester Arnold

*Study for A Hawk's Attention*

2015

Oil on linen

18 x 22 inches

“Will you not embrace the world  
in its mad abundance,  
teeming with the gifts of times’  
expansions and contractions, and to possess  
with senses bright and open,  
all that swirls around us-”

-Chester Arnold from *Possessions* (2014)

**San Francisco, CA:** Catharine Clark Gallery presents *Mad abundance*, a solo exhibition of work by Chester Arnold. A line of poetry titles this show—one of many composed by Arnold and inscribed on the backs of his paintings. It speaks to the passionate intensity, colorful history, and fecund forms and sources referenced in Arnold’s paintings of earth’s extremes. A recent trip by Arnold to the Tahoe Basin in the Sierra Nevada Mountains spurred this new conceptual direction, deftly portrayed by formal aesthetic choices in palette, color and light. Mining as a metaphorical and literal phenomenon is an obsessive subject for Arnold, appearing anew in works like *The Bottom of the World* (2014). Arnold grew up on fantastical stories of his ancestors in the gold trade: one uncle smuggled gold across the US-Mexico border landing himself in San Quentin; another left Arnold enough money from his mining adventures to finance a European tour for the young, struggling artist. But the abundance drawn out of the earth holds as much meaning for the artist as the cavity left behind. The mesmerizing form of the mine spiral, depicted in *sub specie Aeternitatis* (2014) is what anchors Arnold’s most recent work. Poetry written on the back of the

canvas speaks of the spiral's "churning depth/irresistible rhythm," as a universal force. His words suggest segues to paintings such as *Three Strikes* (2014) with its extreme, abundant energy from above providing counterbalance and connection between earth and sky. Arnold cites *Possessions* (2014), a work inspired by the environs of the Tahoe Basin, and inscribed on the back with the poetry which titles the exhibit, as the first painting in this current direction. The romantic beauty of the natural world present in the pond, trees, sky and snake is subverted by Arnold's preoccupation with the detritus of human accumulation littering the scene. Nature's landscape however, in power and abundance, triumphs—a departure for Arnold. Rendered awestruck by the earthly phenomena he witnessed around the time of his exhibit at the Nevada Museum of Art in 2010, Arnold's new divergence, informed by greats like Carl Blechen and Johan Christian Dahl, seems an egress from the politics of landscape and a renewed attempt to bear witness to the might of heaven and earth.

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Chester Arnold | *Mad abundance*

February 21 – April 4, 2015

**Saturday, February 21** : Opening reception with the artist      4:00 - 6:00 pm

*This event is free and open to the public.*

Media inquiries contact Allison Stockman: [marketing@cclarkgallery.com](mailto:marketing@cclarkgallery.com)

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**Chester Arnold:** American by birth, but raised in post-war Germany during the formative years of his childhood, Chester Arnold is interested in the capacity of painting to convey the complexities of the human psyche. His compositions often present skewed linear perspectives that place the viewer at a remove, above and/or beyond an unfolding narrative. Arnold's work is currently part of a travelling museum exhibition, *Environmental Impact*, which opened at The Canton Museum in 2013, with continuous touring in 2015 across the United States. His recent exhibitions include solo shows at the Sonoma County Museum (2013) and American University Museum, Katzen Art Center (2012). The Nevada Museum of Art's 2010 exhibit of Arnold's work, *On Earth as it is in Heaven*, was accompanied by a monographic catalogue. Notable group exhibitions include a San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art highlight of Arnold and other 2005 Eureka Fellows; and most recently *Sleight of Hand: Painting and Illusion*, at the San Jose Museum of Art (2014). Arnold's exhibition history includes Donald Kuspit's selection of his work for *New Old Masters* at the National Museum in Gdańsk, Poland in 2006, and a major solo exhibition at the San Jose Museum of Art which was also accompanied by a catalogue. Arnold's work is further represented in the public collections of many institutions, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Pasadena Museum of California Art, the Nevada Museum of Art, the di Rosa Preserve: Art and Nature, the Tacoma Museum of Art, and the San Jose Museum of Art. He has been critically reviewed in *Artforum*, *Works + Conversation*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. He lives and works in Sonoma, California, and had his first exhibition at Catharine Clark Gallery in 2003.