

Painting & Drawing

08 November 2012

International Contemporary Art

CORBETT VS. DEMPSEY, Chicago
BARBARA GROSS GALERIE, Munich
CATHARINE CLARK GALLERY, San Francisco
ARCILESI | HOMBERG FINE ART, Brooklyn, New York
THOMAS ROBERTELLO GALLERY, Chicago
GALERIE NORDENHAKE, Berlin

CATHARINE CLARK GALLERY, San Francisco



Chester Arnold
60 Years in the Forest, 2012
Oil on linen
71 ½ x 56 inches
Courtesy of Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco

CHESTER ARNOLD

A Pilgrim's Progress

November 3 – December 22, 2012

Catharine Clark Gallery announces *A Pilgrim's Progress*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by **Chester Arnold**.

For Chester Arnold's 2012 solo exhibition at Catharine Clark Gallery, the artist presents new paintings rooted in imagery of the west - grand landscapes scarred by the work of miners, stratified and marked by history: geological and human. Metaphorical narratives and occasions for contemplating the duality of the human journey unfold on the painting's panoramic stages. The binary sides of our emotional experiences, dark and light, are present in each work. The title of the exhibition, *A Pilgrim's Progress*, references a Christian allegory written by John Bunyan and published in 1678, *The Pilgrim's Progress from This World to That Which Is to Come*. It is regarded as one of the most significant works of religious English literature. The paintings in the exhibit convey the artist's personal journey through what he calls "the disorganized religion of art." "As the secular madman that I am, there is a constant, inescapable commentary staring back at me from the Judeo-Christian pollution in my early life. I love the stories, but deplore the dogma." Arnold's painted imagery also grapples with transitions and the passage of time (perhaps his own aging) through depictions of elderly men, skeletons, and the heavily chiseled chasms in the earth. Arnold's tenebrous mood in the paintings is tempered by passages that are also humorous and light, providing visual reprieve and a bit of optimism in the ponderous, larger narratives.

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 beyond an unfolding narrative. The romantic natural landscape in Arnold's paintings, in part informed by the work of 19th century German painter Caspar David Friedrich and classic literature, is littered and marred with the abject accumulation of modern cultural detritus. Arnold's work was the subject of a survey exhibition at the Nevada Museum of Art, *On Earth as it is in Heaven* (2010), and was accompanied by a monograph. Next year, Arnold's paintings on the subject of accumulation and dispersal will be featured in a solo exhibition at American University's Katzen Art Center, Washington DC. In 2008, Arnold's work was included in the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art's exhibition which highlighted recipients of the 2005 Eureka Fellowship. Donald Kuspit selected Arnold's work for *New Old Masters* at the National Museum in Gdańsk, Poland in 2006, accompanied by a major catalogue. In 2001, an extensive solo exhibition of Arnold's paintings was presented at the San Jose Museum of Art, 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, the Tacoma Museum of Art, the San Jose Museum of Art, and the Crocker Art Museum. His work has been reviewed in *Artforum*, *Works + Conversation*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. He lives and works in Sonoma, California, and has been represented by Catharine Clark Gallery since 2003.

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