

PACE LONDON

Nigel Cooke
Roman Willow

21 September – 22 October 2016
6 Burlington Gardens, London, W1S 3ET

Private view: Tuesday 20 September 2016, 6–8 p.m.



London—Pace London is pleased to announce *Roman Willow*, an exhibition of new paintings by Nigel Cooke. The exhibition will be on view at 6 Burlington Gardens from 21 September to 22 October 2016.

Cooke's exhibition coincides with the release of a major new monograph, published by Phaidon, which will survey the artist's career and feature new essays by Marie Darrieussecq and Tony Godfrey, an interview between the artist and Darian Leader and a selection of Cooke's writing. Pace will also publish a new catalogue to accompany the exhibition.

In his first exhibition in London since 2013, Cooke presents a drastic departure from his earlier work. Purging the sort of nihilistic imagery and motifs that had developed as recognizable trademarks of

his practice, the new body of paintings pursues a more poetic sensibility founded in the impressionistic and sensorial. In his new body of paintings, Cooke takes inspiration from his local environment and places such as Córdoba, Formentera, Rome and the Italian Alps. He paints these scenes not as they appear but as he remembers them, working in a highly intuitive manner to transform his memory of the textures and feelings of a place into a constellation of marks that form into an evocative image. The paintings eschew realism, privileging landscapes and space that vibrate with the energy and passion of lived experience.

The new paintings are characterized by wraith-like figures—mostly female, many children—amidst sensorial landscapes. Smouldering logs, sunburnt grass and wisps of smoke emanate a palpable sense of sound, smell and temperature. These images attain their effect largely from Cooke's instinctual and highly physical handling of paint, which endows it with an elemental quality. This quality of the paint adds an emotional resonance to the natural elements of the paintings, particularly the fires blazing on felled trees that recur across this group of work. Within the space of the image, the fire assumes a binary function, warming the figures while also possibly threatening them. Yet the physicality of the fire exceeds these determinations, projecting a sense of ardour and pulsing life that lies in the genesis of the works.

This sense of vitality is echoed in the presence of musical instruments played by the figures, which resonates with the sense of sound and smell captured in the landscapes. The suggestion of songs that cannot be heard introduces an enigmatic quality. It similarly underlines the inherent musicality in each work and emphasizes the way Cooke pushes at the expressive potential of painting, opening it to all of the senses.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Nigel Cooke (b. 1973, Manchester) holds an MA from the Royal College of Art, London (1997), and a PhD from Goldsmiths, University of London (2004). Solo exhibitions of Cooke's work have been presented at the Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (2013); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2007); South London Gallery (2006); Cleveland Museum of Art (2004); and the Tate Britain, London (2004). His work is currently featured in the group exhibition *Identity Revisited* at The Warehouse, Dallas, which is on view until 1 December.

His work is in the permanent collections of institutions including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Hammer Museum, University of California, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Sammlung Goetz Collection, Munich; and the Tate, London.

Cooke lives and works in Canterbury. This is his second exhibition at Pace.

PACE

Pace is a leading contemporary art gallery representing many of the most significant international artists and estates of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Founded by Arne Glimcher in Boston in 1960 and led by Marc Glimcher, Pace has been a constant, vital force in the art world and has introduced many renowned artists' work to the public for the first time. Pace has mounted more than 800 exhibitions, including scholarly shows that have subsequently travelled to museums, and published over 400 exhibition catalogues. Today, Pace has nine locations worldwide: three galleries in New York; one in London; one in Palo Alto, California; one in Beijing; and spaces in Hong Kong, Paris and Menlo Park, California. In 2016, the gallery launched Pace Art + Technology, a new programme dedicated to showcasing interdisciplinary art groups, collectives and studios whose works explore the confluence of art and technology. Pace London inaugurated its flagship gallery at 6 Burlington Gardens in 2012.

Pace London is open to the public Tuesday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
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Image: Nigel Cooke, *Salome*, 2016, Oil on Linen Backed with Sailcloth, 230 cm x 220 cm x 5.2 cm (90-9/16" x 86-5/8" x 2-1/16") © 2016 Nigel Cooke, courtesy Pace London