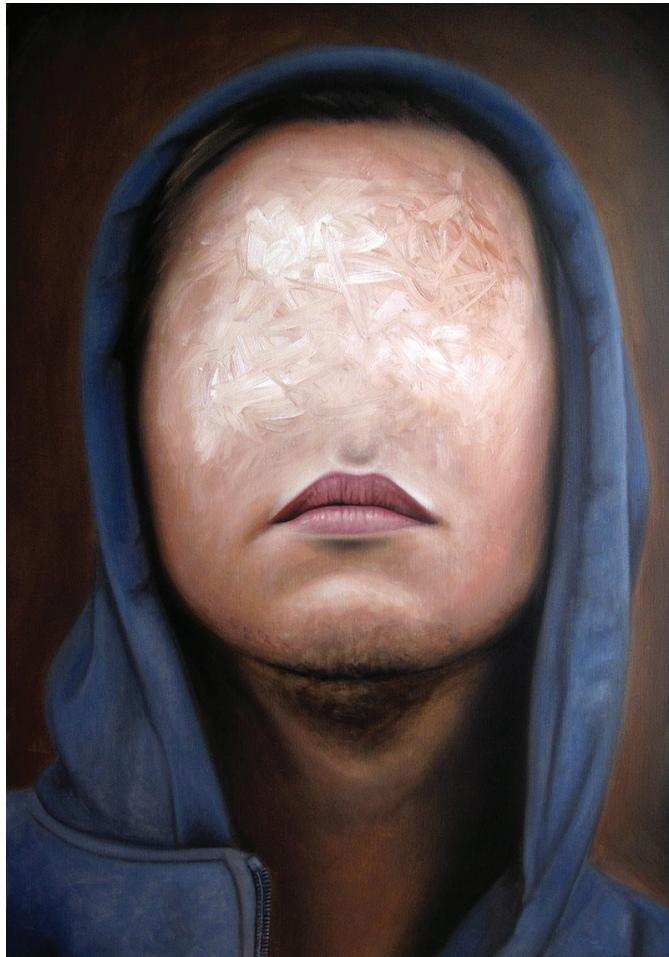


For Immediate Release:
February 8th, 2016
Los Angeles

COREY HELFORD GALLERY
NATHAN JAMES
“DARK MATTER”



**OPENING RECEPTION SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, FROM 7-11PM
ON VIEW FEBRUARY 20 – MARCH 19, 2016**

On Saturday, February 20th, 2016, Corey Helford Gallery in Los Angeles presents London based artist Nathan James in his first major solo exhibition in the United States, “Dark Matter.”

Nathan James celebrates the darker aspects of life by using the jarring and colorful conventions of the popular culture of his youth- twisting this so called “pessimism” into a kind of demented visual style that he calls “Pessimist Pop”. Drawing upon the slapstick and fantastical world of the cartoons and comic books he read as a child, the glamor of Hollywood’s Golden Age, and his own personal trials in life, James characters’ are like a Big Bang of visual references. His work has connections to Pop Art, Surrealism, and Expressionism, where his wonderfully grotesque portraits often appear to be melting, other times fusing together with each other. Over time, James has come to liken this jarring convergence of darkness with fantasy to ‘dark matter’, referring to the high-energy, randomly moving particles created at the origin of the universe. His solo exhibition “Dark Matter” marks the continuation of his ongoing series titled “Creepshow”, “creepy” subjects in various states of disintegration, mutation and evolution, as well as the debut of a new series titled, “Faceless”, anonymous subjects without a face, rendered in thick, palette-knife strokes of paint that seems to come out of the canvas.

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COREY HELFORD GALLERY

Though the foundation of these portraits are images of beautiful and modelesque strangers, their physical beauty is offset by James' taste for unsavory abstraction, lovingly painted with hair-raising delight.

"In the field of science, dark matter and energy refer to the theory that roughly 95% of all the material in the universe which, despite remaining unseen or unexplained, is responsible for shaping the world around us. "Dark Matter" is part of an ongoing body of work focusing on the hidden psychological forces that motivate human behavior," James explains. "The subjects of these dark, moody portraits are depersonalized through minimalism and abstraction creating disquieting tension between the personal and the archetypal. The characters are depicted without sight, as if by being blind they were powerless to what's ahead, controlled by some hidden forces. This tension is further emphasized by the juxtaposition of disparate styles and applications; expressive impasto working of the paint in some areas of the canvas, and a cool, smooth, almost photo-real blending in others. I feel that we can inhabit the same space as these disturbingly rendered sitters, yet they remain separated from us. It's as if the blinds are drawn, we've lost our peep-hole, and can only guess at what's going on inside by the turmoil being expressed on the surface." The opening reception for Nathan James will be hosted Saturday, February 20th, 2016, from 7-11pm at Corey Helford Gallery. The reception is open to the public, and the exhibition is on view through March 19th, 2016.

NATHAN JAMES

Nathan James' current series of paintings are based on the idea of "Pessimist Pop", a reaction to the highly-polished, busy, celebratory work of artists like Koons and Murakami. James subverts modern life's most aspirational image. While dealing in the same sort of bold shapes and cultural iconography, he uses them to take a darkly humorous look at contemporary life. Painting in oil, often with homemade paints, on canvas or linen, James takes images of Americana, advertising, pin-ups, Hollywood and traditional beauty and injects them with his own feelings towards the characters and the scenes they inhabit. His paintings look at the underbelly of these images and contextualizes them in a real, unforgiving world. James focuses on the lives and worlds of the under-class, failures, perverts and slackers, rather than beautiful, successful people. Bleak comedy and personal tragedy sit uncomfortably close together in James' characters, which draw on both the failed industrial background of his childhood and the current mood of insecurity and paranoia present in contemporary society. Born in Kirkland Lake, Ontario, Canada, Nathan James spent much of his life in the Toronto area and studied at the Ontario College of Art and Design before moving to London, UK where he currently lives and works.

COREY HELFORD GALLERY

Corey Helford Gallery was established in 2006 by Jan Corey Helford and her husband, television producer and creator, Bruce Helford (Anger Management, The Drew Carey Show, George Lopez, The Oblongs). Corey Helford Gallery represents a diverse collection of Contemporary artists influenced by today's pop culture, encompassing the genres of New Figurative, Pop Surreal, Graffiti and Street Art. Artists include Josh Agle (Shag), Ron English, D*Face, Camille Rose Garcia, Chloe Early, Eine, Natalia Fabia, Hush, Liz McGrath, Richard J. Oliver, Herakut, Kukula, Sylvia Ji, Eric Joyner, Brandi Milne, Korin Faught, Mary Jane Ansell, Martin Wittfooth, Lori Nelson, Hannah Yata, Camilla d'Errico, Hikari Shimoda and more. Renowned for its notable exhibitions, the gallery has presented "Charity By Numbers," which was co-curated by Gary Baseman and featured an unprecedented lineup of artists including Mark Ryden, Marion Peck, Shepard Fairey, Todd and Kathy Schorr, Camille Rose Garcia, and Michael Hussar, as well as "La Noche de la Fusion," an epic Carnivalesque festival and solo exhibition for Pervasive artist Gary Baseman. In 2010, Corey Helford Gallery partnered with Bristol's City Museum & Art Gallery for the transatlantic collaboration "Art From The New World," a world-class United Kingdom museum exhibition showcasing work by a formidable group of 49 of the finest emerging and noted American artists.

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COREY HELFORD GALLERY

Corey Helford Gallery presents new exhibitions approximately every four weeks. For more information and an upcoming exhibition schedule, please visit coreyhelfordgallery.com.

Corey Helford Gallery Los Angeles

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