

Graham Nickson

Eye Level

September 4 – October 13, 2019

Reception: Saturday, September 7th, 5-7 pm



AB, 2003, Oil on canvas, 20 x 16 in.

Betty Cuningham Gallery is pleased to open *Eye Level*, an exhibition of portraits by Graham Nickson, on September 7th. This will be the artist's third exhibition with the Gallery, but will be his first exhibition of 'faces' - a part of the figure that is typically hidden from view in his paintings. A reception for the artist will be held at the Gallery, September 7th, 5 – 7pm.

Nickson, who has shown in New York since the mid-1970s, is particularly identified for his highly saturated color, his strong geometric compositions and his large expansive landscapes often inhabited by figures. Characteristically, he avoids confrontation with the face, as it can be an interruption to the wholeness of the painting. However, Nickson has painted heads privately throughout his career, clearly confronting this challenge. The current exhibition, *Eye Level*, features 14 of these modestly scaled portraits (dating from 2000 to 2019) of "single heads". The artist explains:

"I consider the whole painting, with its diverse collection of images, a portrait in its own right. Figures, if included, are part of that 'wholeness.' The figure is just one element in the totality. The idea of painting portraits is at the opposite end of my usual procedure. The body is as much a signature of the person as the face. 'Likeness' is

not just made from the features of the head, the whole room or landscape can affect the identity of the person painted. This stated, I believe in the value of opposites- so occasionally, over many years, I have painted single heads."

Nickson was born in Lancashire, England, and completed his studies at Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts (BA) and the Royal College of Art in London (MA) in 1972. Nickson has been the recipient of the Prix de Rome (1972-74), the Harkness Fellowship at Yale University (1976-78), the Guggenheim Fellowship (1989), and the Ingram Merrill Fellowship (1993). Solo exhibitions include *Graham Nickson: Private Myths* at the Naples Museum of Art, FL (2007), *Graham Nickson: Works from Private Collections* at the Boca Raton Museum of Art, FL (2006), and *Meeting and Passing* at the Lillehammer Art Museum in Norway (2007). His work can be seen in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; The Morgan Library and Museum, New York, NY, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University, Boston, MA; The Albright Knox Gallery, Buffalo, NY; the Frye Art Museum, Seattle, WA; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT; and the Lillehammer Kunstmuseum, Lillehammer, Norway among others. He has been a faculty member and Dean of the New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture since 1988. The artist currently lives and works in New York City.

The exhibition will remain on view through October 13, 2019.

For further information, artist biography and/or images, please contact the gallery.

Listing Information: Betty Cuningham Gallery is located at 15 Rivington Street, b/t Bowery and Chrystie Street, New York, NY 10002
T: 212-242-2772 **E:** info@bettycuninghamgallery.com **W:** www.bettycuninghamgallery.com

Public Transportation: F train to Second Ave, 6 Train to Spring Street, RW trains to Prince Street, JZ trains to Bowery

Gallery Hours: Wed- Sat: 10am- 6pm, Sun: 12-6pm, Tues: by Appointment

Next Exhibition: Rudolf de Crignis, October 19 – November 24, 2019