

DAVID PRICE

**The Close of the Silver Age**

**17 May – 23 June 2012**

Art First is delighted to be representing David Price. The title for his first exhibition in the main gallery space is taken from a small painting by Cranach the Elder in the collection of the National Gallery, London. Price brings fresh interpretations to the enduring themes that engage his interest in Renaissance painting, through a distinctly modern lens. The brushstrokes of Cranach, the delicate lines of Dürer and the sweeping panoramas of Mantegna and the Brueghel dynasty are evident visible influences within his own tangled and complex landscape compositions.

Alongside historical and pseudo-religious themes, Price asserts a contemporary reading, responding to the resonance and impact that paintings can have 500 years after they were painted. The signature painting *Close of the Silver Age* has much of Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Ozymandias* about it, as heroic statues crumble and moulder along a once grand boulevard being reclaimed by the natural world. Science fiction, often a fertile ground for the re-imagining of mythology, lends its own imagery; Price's painting of *The Runners* depicts an Eden-like pastoral landscape inhabited by two figures who bear a striking resemblance to Michael York and Jenny Agutter in the 1976 film *Logan's Run*.

"By painting Logan and Jessica as Adam and Eve I wanted to examine the parallels with this timeless story and to mock man's hopeless endeavours to understand existence through religion. The paintings I use as reference are 'Orpheus' by Roland Savery, 'The Garden of Eden' by Jan Breughel and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century painting 'Heroic Landscape With a Rainbow' by Joseph Anton Koch.

As Price borrows, re-distributes and weaves together strands of historical and popular culture his own distinctive vision emerges. He may take his lead from historic paintings, but he reworks the themes where they seem relevant, with a seriousness and an honest investigation of enduring truths that span civilization as we know it.

David Price studied at Edinburgh College of Art before completing two MA's at Newcastle (fine art) and the Royal College of Art (printmaking). He has held a fellowship in printmaking at the Royal Academy since 2010. He was selected for the Bloomberg New Contemporaries in 2009, and first showed with AF Projects in 2010.

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