

## PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Isabel Cooper  
 T: 01372 462 190  
 E: isabel@parkerharris.co.uk

www.jerwoodvisualarts.org

## Jerwood Encounters: Suspicion

Curated by Dan Coombs

5 NOVEMBER – 7 DECEMBER 2014, Jerwood Space, London

NATHAN CASH DAVIDSON / STEPHEN CHAMBERS RA / DAN COOMBS / SIMON LINKE / GAVIN LOCKHEART / KATE LYDDON / DARREN MARSHALL / DAMIEN MEADE / BENJAMIN SENIOR / GERALDINE SWAYNE / NEAL TAIT / COVADONGA VALDÉS / FREYJA WRIGHT



Left: Damien Meade, *Jarus*, 2013. Courtesy of the artist and Scheublein + Bak, Zurich. Right: Covadonga Valdés, *Sleep 2*, 2011. Courtesy of the artist

Acclaimed British artist, **Dan Coombs** curates *Suspicion*, the next exhibition in the Jerwood Encounters series featuring the work of 13 inspiring painters who integrate narrative into the formal structure of their painting.

These artists create narratives that hide within their pictures, either through a reference to film or photographic image, or through a collage of discombobulated elements that build into an overall structure. The use of narrative, rather than providing a key or explanation for the picture, instead becomes tantalisingly ambiguous, without a beginning or resolution.

The exhibition title takes inspiration from the 1941 Hitchcock film of the same name, Coombs explains:

*“The famous glass of milk sequence in ‘Suspicion’ involves a direct contrast of darkness and light. Shot in black and white, the white milk seems to create a bright hole in the fabric of the film, an empty space, a void which renders the narrative ambiguous, surrounded by Cary Grant’s dark silhouette and the imprisoning shadows of the mullioned windows. As well as being like a collage, the sequence is a suspended moment, outside of time. Here, the unfolding medium of cinema almost comes close to the deafening silence and fixity of the medium of painting.”*

Coombs considers the relationship between paint and film; how narrative was sidelined in twentieth century painting, only recently to reemerge. He comments:

*“The paintings in ‘Suspicion’ try and embody the contradiction that exists in narrative painting. We are looking at a single moment, but a moment that stretches out time forever. What does figurative painting become in our minds when we have film and photography to compare it to? The modernist answer is that it has to fold in on itself and become abstract. Against this logic, the painters in this show persist in exploring the imaginary, and like treasure hunters dream of finding something buried within it.*

*We might associate painting with a ‘slow time’ and this is certainly true of Covadonga Valdés’ painting ‘Sleep 2’ (pictured). The slow, precise painting of the leaves echoes their slow movement as they envelop the body of the car, as the forest encases the castle that contains the sleeping beauty. Similarly, Damien Meade’s paintings of exquisitely sculpted busts embody the stillness of still life. The woman who is represented in ‘Janus’ (pictured) will never return our gaze.”*

This collection of new work by a unique line-up of artists allows visitors to slow down, to consider each artwork and its narrative. The implied narratives intensify the ambiguity of their work, lifting them out of the literal into something more like a memory, a dream or a confession. The works offer a surreal quality with hidden symbols and suspended meanings.

A catalogue with essays by Dan Coombs and writer, Sean Ashton, will be available in the gallery during the exhibition. Blog posts by Patrick Langley, Jerwood Visual Arts Writer in Residence, will be published throughout the exhibition here: [blog.jerwoodvisualarts.org](http://blog.jerwoodvisualarts.org)

Also showing at Jerwood Space until 12 December is Rhys Coren’s *If We Can Dance Together* in the Project Space.

For further details about the exhibition and accompanying events visit: [jerwoodvisualarts.org](http://jerwoodvisualarts.org)

Jerwood Visual Arts offers development opportunities for early career artists. The third installment of the Jerwood Painting Fellowships initiative will open for submissions in December 2014.

- Ends -

## Exhibition information

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Jerwood Encounters: Suspicion</b>
<b>Exhibition dates:</b>	<b>5 November – 7 December 2014</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Jerwood Space, 171 Union St, London SE1 0LN</b>
<b>Opening Times:</b>	<b>Mon-Fri 10am–5pm, Sat/Sun 10am–3pm</b>
<b>Admission:</b>	<b>Free</b>
<b>Nearest tube:</b>	<b>Southwark, London Bridge or Borough</b>
<b>Website:</b>	<b><a href="http://jerwoodvisualarts.org">jerwoodvisualarts.org</a></b>
<b>Twitter:</b>	<b>@JerwoodJVA #JVASuspicion</b>
<b>Exhibition events:</b>	Free but must be booked in advance, for further information please visit <a href="http://www.jerwoodvisualarts.org">www.jerwoodvisualarts.org</a> or contact: <a href="mailto:jva@jerwoodspace.co.uk">jva@jerwoodspace.co.uk</a>

## Notes to editors

**Dan Coombs** (b.1971) studied at The Ruskin School (1989-92) and Royal College of Art (1992-94). Solo exhibitions include: *Nudes*, New Art Projects, London (2014); *Heaven and Earth*, The Fine Art Society, London (2011); *The Dreamers*, Fred Gallery, London (2009); *The Garden*, Mihai Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles, US (2005); *Three Painters*, Cornerhouse, Manchester (2002); *Dan Coombs*, The Approach, London (2011, 2005, 1999,

1997). Group exhibitions include: *Art Britannia: The Best of New British*, Madonna Building, Miami, US (2013); *Dirty Pop, & Model*, Leeds (2013); *Mike Silva, Dan Coombs*, Charlie Dutton Gallery, London (2013); *Something Old, Something New*, Fred Gallery, London (2013); *Speak! Clown*, Fold Gallery, London (2013); *Masquerade: Be Another*, Stephen Lawrence Gallery (2013); *A House of Many Windows*, Collyer Bristow Gallery, London (2013); *London 12*, Museum of the City of Prague, Prague, CZ (2012); *What Have I Done*, The Fine Art Society, London (2010); *Metropolis Rise: New Art from London*, Shanghai and 798 Space, China (2006); La Biennale De Lyon, FR (2003); *Young British Artists Part VI*, Saatchi Gallery, London (1996). Coombs was a Rome Scholar in Painting at British School at Rome (1994-5). His work has been included in *The New Neurotic Realism*, Saatchi Publications (1998), and *Young British Artists: The Saatchi Decade*, Booth-Clibborn Editions (1999). [www.dancoombs.co.uk](http://www.dancoombs.co.uk)

**Jerwood Visual Arts** is a contemporary gallery programme of awards, exhibitions and events at Jerwood Space, London and on tour nationally. Jerwood Visual Arts supports and showcases the work of talented emerging artists. It aims to make connections and provoke conversations within and across visual arts disciplines. A major initiative of the Jerwood Charitable Foundation. [www.jerwoodvisualarts.org](http://www.jerwoodvisualarts.org)

**Jerwood Encounters** are one-off curated exhibitions which provide artists and curators with new exhibition opportunities and the chance to explore issues and territories in the borderlands between the main disciplinary fields of the Jerwood Visual Arts programme. Previous exhibitions in the Encounters series have included: *TTTT*, curated by Sarah Williams, 14 May – 22 June 2014; *Family Politics*, curated by Photoworks, 6 November – 8 December 2013; *After Hours*, curated by Nick Eagleton, 15 May – 23 June 2013; *“Now I Gotta Reason”*, curated by Marcus Coates and Grizedale Arts, 7 November – 9 December 2012; *ASSEMBLY* curated by Sarah Williams, 9 May – 24 June 2012; *TERRA*, curated by Hayley Skipper, Forestry Commission England, 9 November – 11 December 2011; *SHOW*, curated by Sarah Williams, 16 March – 21 April 2011; *For the Sake of the Image*, curated by Suki Chan, 3 March – 1 April 2010 and *Passing Thoughts and Making Plans*, curated by Catherine Yass, 4 November – 13 December 2009.

**Jerwood Charitable Foundation** is dedicated to imaginative and responsible revenue funding of the arts, supporting emerging artists to develop and grow at important stages in their careers. The aim of its funding is to allow artists and arts organisations to thrive; to continue to develop their skills, imagination and creativity with integrity. It works with artists across art forms, from dance and theatre to literature, music and the visual arts. [www.jerwoodcharitablefoundation.org](http://www.jerwoodcharitablefoundation.org)