

NOHRA HAIME GALLERY 730 FIFTH AVENUE

ADAM STRAUS: DUST TO DUST

February 28– March 29, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



DUST TO DUST, an exhibition of three major paintings by Adam Straus will be on view at Nohra Haime Gallery from February 28 to March 29, 2014.

Continuing his exploration of pixelation, Straus lays out modern issues by bringing the past to the present. These works are inspired by the natural and human disasters of the world that have become part of our history, but manage to simultaneously coincide with our present.

Dustbowl or at Home on the Prairie, 2013, and *Dustbowl, Farmer and Comet*, 2012-2013, were inspired by the renowned 2012 Ken Burns documentary, *The Dust Bowl*, depicting one of the first major natural disasters caused by human kind. The viewing of this film stressed Straus' belief that we have gone even further in our punishment of our land, which brings nature to react with anger. The old apocalyptic images of *The Dust Bowl* projected on the TV screen connected in a way to Straus' new technique.

The top stardust panels of the diptychs emphasize astronomer Carl Sagan's quote, "We are made of star-stuff". Straus converges in these paintings the ideas of the simplicity of our existence, represented in the solitude of only one figure in the middle of the vast landscape, and the great impact we have in the world and the universe we live in, concepts that are also reflected in the title of the exhibition.

Man Searching for the End of Destruction, 2013, also contains that repetitive cycle in history. It is inspired by a World War II image of Cologne that Straus had previously used in his work. What impacts from this particular scene, is the cathedral, standing straight in the desolated surroundings. Cologne was one of the most bombed and destroyed cities in Germany during the war, which makes the image even more powerful. Like a house after a tornado, the cathedral stands still, with the strange dignity of a disaster survivor, but also as a strong symbol of hope. Straus came back to it after watching on TV the devastating images of the ongoing conflict in Syria.

Straus brings up here the consequences of destruction, climate change, and man's harmful actions in nature. He also reminds us that we are star-stuff, we are dust going back to dust.

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