

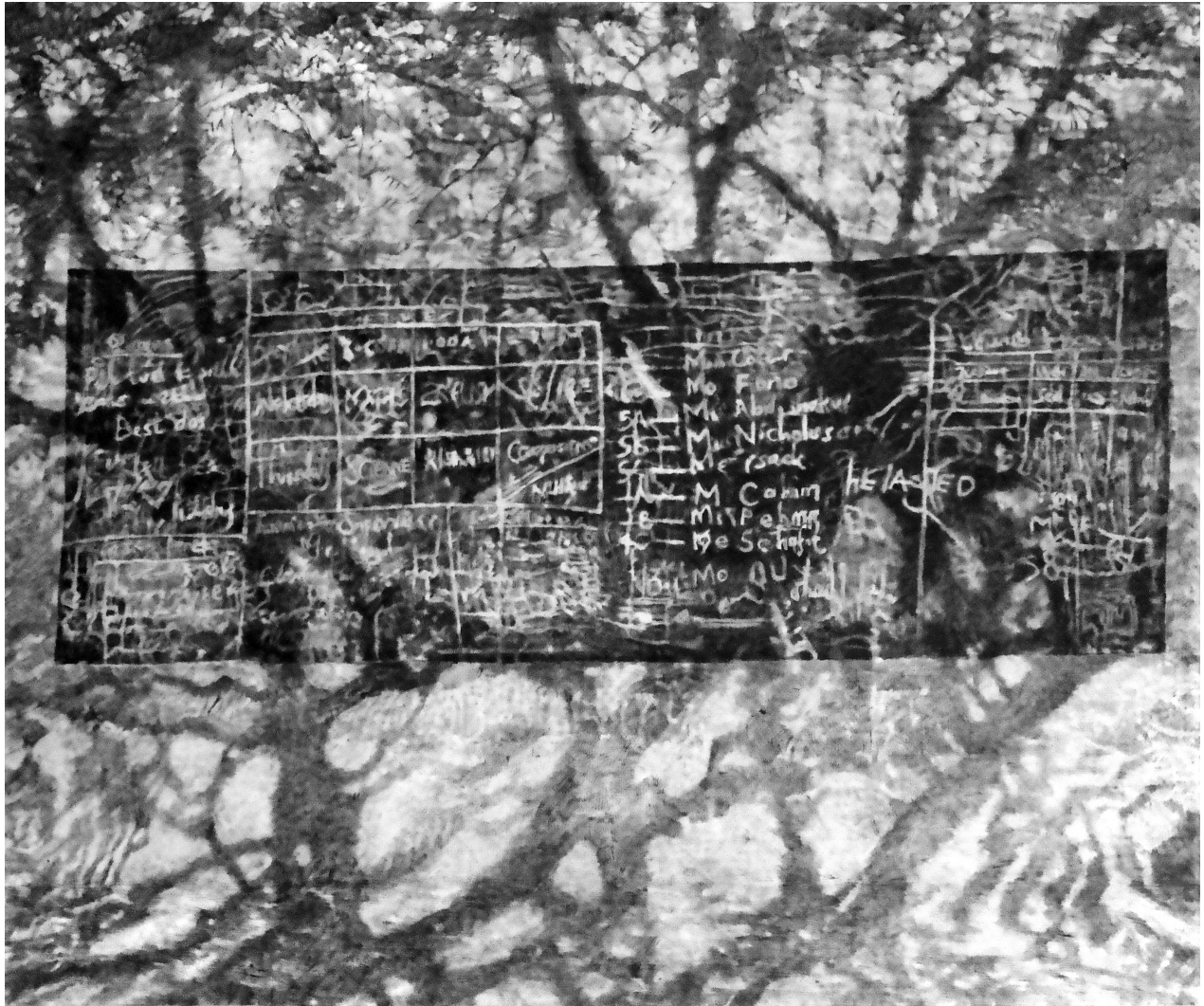
NOHRA HAIME GALLERY 500 W 21st STREET

HUGO BASTIDAS

CODEFICATION

November 21 - December 30, 2018

Opening Reception: Tuesday, November 20th from 6-8pm



CODEFICATION, 2018, oil on linen, 50 x 60 in.

CODEFICATION, Hugo Bastidas' recent series of large black and white paintings, represents the artist's interest in how we reach deeper levels of understanding when we look at an image, hear a story, or read an article. It is an ongoing challenge to reread, decode, and come to one's own conclusions. These works of oil on linen are in line with his oeuvre in terms of a restrained palette, medium, and the ways in which they are quietly layered in meaning.

The piece corresponding to the title of the exhibition, *Codefication*, responds specifically to society's current debacle of deciphering messages. Reading between the lines and retaining independent thought in the face of what is presented to us is not a new phenomenon. However, as language and our ways of receiving news change, there are new skills to be developed in order to preserve critical thinking. Within *Codefication*, there is a logical system behind the unfamiliar

arrangement of letters and numbers on the chalkboard. Partially obscured by layers of shadows and light, certain signs and symbols are recognizable, but reading them presents a challenge.

Readily visible in the remaining works are powerful puncta: the small detail within a scene that pierces the viewer and sticks with them. Although the meaning behind these seemingly out of context elements may not be abundantly clear to the viewer, they do not provoke a sense of frustration or impatience. Often engulfed by nature, they encourage closer inspection through the artist's soft, deliberate treatment of the medium. In *Despite*, completed in the aftermath of the 2016 presidential election, we are placed in a forest, facing the back of a small toy interrupting the scene. Caught mid-step, the girl figurine is attached to a base, plastic and frozen within a scene of lush growth.

Multiple connections can be made within this series to specific current events and the artist's subsequent response. Bastidas views these works as in line with his conviction that we have a responsibility to elucidate meaning, to access all levels, and unscramble and translate in order to understand.

Bastidas was born in Quito, Ecuador and raised in New Jersey. Over the course of his career he has received numerous awards and grants, including the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant and a Fulbright Fellowship. He received his MFA from Hunter College in 1987, and has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions in the United States, Europe, and South Korea.

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For more information: Leslie Garrett at 212-888-3550 or art@nohrahaimегallery.com