

NOHRA HAIME GALLERY 730 FIFTH AVENUE

GREGG LOUIS

LIKENESS

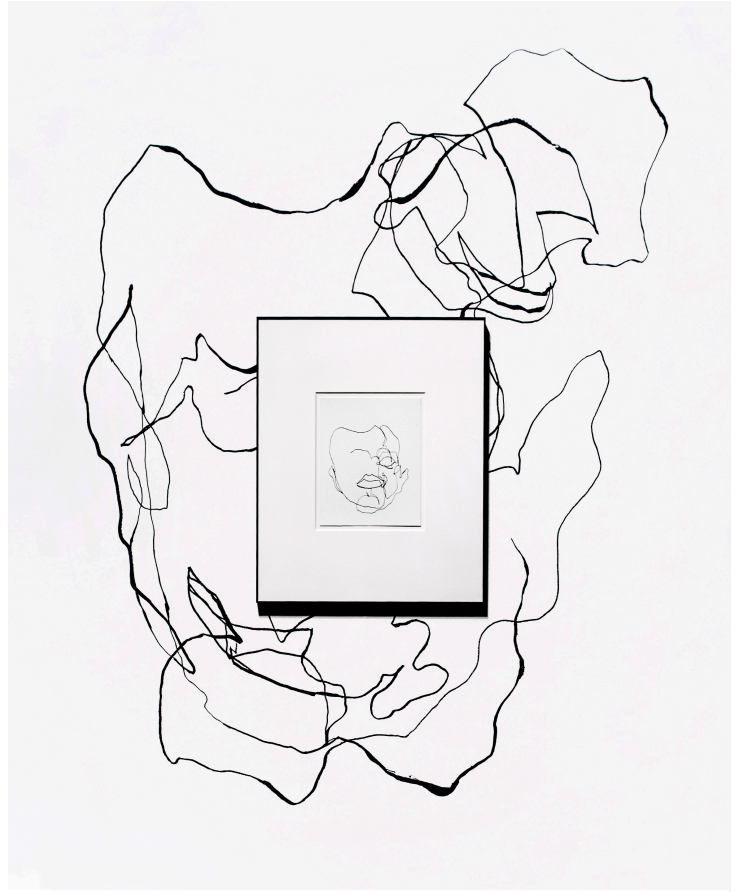
November 17 – December 31, 2015

LIKENESS, Gregg Louis' newest creative experiment, will be on view at Nohra Haime Gallery from November 17 to December 31, 2015. Continuing his research on the line between abstraction and representation, he applies self-examination and perception to delve into our brain's responses toward fractured images and visual memory structures.

The exhibition is composed of a set of drawing and painting experiments that are both visually and conceptually linked. The *Blind Self Portraits* are inspired by a basic drawing technique called blind contour drawing, an exercise designed to hone focus and observation skills. Louis borrows this process to create self-portraits. Fixating on his reflection in the mirror, Louis draws a self-portrait without ever looking at the paper, thus releasing a representational fluidity connected to self-perception.

Taking it a step further he does another blind portrait by looking only at the original drawing he created. Louis then hand-paints this second portrait directly onto the wall from a projection, completely breaking the representational character and articulating a new fully abstract field. These wall paintings serve as a backdrop to their original counterparts, which are hung and framed on top. The *Double Blind Self Portraits* deal with the variability of perception, and how our brain uses the information contained in an abstraction to transform it into a more literal image.

Finally, in addition to the *Double Blind Self Portraits*, Louis closes the perceptual cycle by reworking the portraits and granting them a more solidified quality through colorful ink washes. Filling in the negative spaces of these initial drawings, he creates *Blind Self Portraits*, which are linked to the role of memory in perception and visual identification. They refer to the idea we hold of a specific individual's face, and how this image begins to blur and acquire an abstract quality, forming an obstacle in the reconstruction of our memories.



DOUBLE BLIND SELF PORTRAIT #1, 2014, ink on paper and wall, dimensions vary

"We see with the eyes, but we see with the brain as well. And seeing with the brain is often called imagination. And we are familiar with the landscapes of our own imagination, our inscapes. We've lived with them all our lives."

Oliver Sacks

Likeness projects the analytical-synthetic process our brain endures in perceiving images. In Louis' creations, we find conceptual worries linked to acclaimed neurologist Oliver Sacks' studies on perceptual conditions, such as prosopagnosia or face-blindness. Louis uses these references to incorporate a deeply personal insight into our culture's interpretation of images, and how this affects the act of creation. Quoting Dr. Edelman, Oliver Sacks' links perception and creativity: "Every act of perception," Edelman writes, "is to some degree an act of creation, and every act of memory is to some degree an act of imagination."

In defying the borders between representation and conceptual perception, The *Blind Self Portraits* go back to a lineage of meta message in the arts, from Magritte's *The Treachery of Images*, to Kosuth's *One and Three Chairs*.

By using himself, or his image, as the catalyst of these creations, Louis goes one step further and integrates a contemporary attitude to explore even deeper into the waters of self-perception.

Gregg Louis earned a B.F.A. at Missouri State University and a M.F.A. at the School of Visual Arts, New York. He is the recipient of several grants and awards such as the *VBS Fonds* and *SNS REAAL Fonds* project grants, Utrecht, the *Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture Fellowship*, and the *Alumni Scholarship Award*, School of Visual Arts. Louis has exhibited throughout the United States and internationally, and participated in notable art fairs such as *Art Miami* and *PULSE Miami, FL*; *PULSE New York*; *Artbo*, Bogota, Colombia; and *Frieze London*.



BLIND SELF PORTRAIT, 2015, ink on canvas, 25 x 22 in.

DATES: November 17 – December 31, 2015

OPENING RECEPTION: Tuesday, November 17 from 6 to 8 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Leslie Garrett at art@nohrahaimegallery.com or 212-888-3550