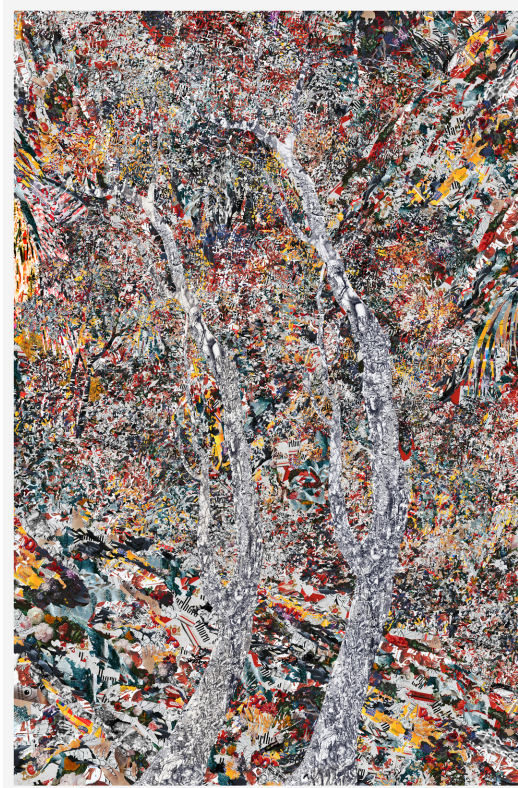


KOHN GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 2, 2015

SIMMONS & BURKE *DUTCH MASTERS*

Opening Reception: Friday, November 6th 2015, 6 – 8pm
Exhibition on view through December 19th, 2015



Los Angeles, California—Kohn Gallery is pleased to present *Dutch Masters*, Simmons & Burke's third solo exhibition with the gallery, consisting of 8 monumental collages that were developed after being given full access to the entire digital archive of paintings in the Rijksmuseum (Netherlands). Rather than building works that superficially reflect the collection as a whole--or simply appropriating the subject matter of old Dutch masterworks--the artists chose to use a careful selection of the incredibly high-resolution images they gained access to as

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templates. These templates were then used to construct abstract, fragmented landscapes that are simultaneously repellent and sublime. Facetiously titled after flavors of cheap cigars, the works illuminate issues of authorship, obscure source material and find balance between beauty and perversion.

While creating the work for *Dutch Masters*, Simmons & Burke embarked on a nearly year-long exploration of this major museum's archive before deciding on background elements such as parts of bushes and trees as templates to fill with a combination of imagery. Although many genres of paintings (maritime, still-life, portraiture, etc.) were available to them in the archive, landscape proved the ideal structure with which to present their definitive style of fragmented imagery and immersive space. The archival photographs of Dutch landscape paintings Simmons & Burke used as templates were so detailed the artists were able to break down individual brushstrokes into shapes (or cells) that were then filled with a chaotic collection of imagery. Some of the more obscure material holdings of the Rijksmuseum (porcelain, manuscripts, clothing, etc.) are present in this collection, but their potency is diminished when integrated with an eclectic array of other high-resolution imagery. These new structures create a sublime landscape from afar, while simultaneously creating a position of challenge for the viewer to interact with the quantity and diversity of images at close proximity. Although these works clearly reflect Simmons & Burke's own infatuation with the material they appropriate, they also express the artists' fondness for irreverence and embody questions of artificiality, access and value.

About Simmons & Burke

Simmons & Burke began their collaboration in 2006 while Case Simmons studied at the San Francisco Art Institute and Andrew Burke studied at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. In 2011 Simmons & Burke were given a Project Room at the Santa Monica Museum of Art for which they made a visual and sound installation of questions from major works of literature. In 2012 they participated in an impressive group show at the Kunsthalle Vienna alongside artists Cindy Sherman and Bruce Nauman. Their work is held in public collections such as the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, The Jumex Collection, Mexico City, The Me Collectors Room, Berlin, and most recently the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. For nearly a decade, Simmons & Burke have worked to accumulate a massive collection of information. Gleaning the internet for images, sounds and text, the artists have meticulously organized this data into intricate palettes from which they build dense digital collages, rich in narrative and psychological space. Frankensteinian in nature, these ambitious collages are comprised of thousands of pre-existing images, which are then appropriated and invigorated with new meaning and purpose. As a result, *Dutch Masters* represents thousands of hours of collection and assembly – a year-long meditation on this particular subject matter and body of data. Simmons & Burke currently live and work in Los Angeles.

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About Kohn Gallery

Since its establishment in 1985 by former Flash Art editor Michael Kohn, Kohn Gallery has presented historically significant exhibitions in Los Angeles alongside exciting contemporary exhibitions, creating meaningful contexts to establish links to the greater art historical continuum. Significant exhibitions include Andy Warhol's *Campbell's Soup Boxes* in December 1986, which opened just weeks before the artist's untimely death; *She: Works by Richard Prince and Wallace Berman* which brought together—for the first time—two generations of leading artists from different coasts; *Bruce Conner: Work from the 1970s*, which inspired the artist's first solo retrospective in Europe at the Kunsthalle Wien and Kunsthalle Zurich (2010). Exhibitions of important New York-based artists have included new works by Christopher Wool, Richard Tuttle, Mark Tansey, Kenny Scharf, and Keith Haring. Kohn Gallery represents important West Coast artists with long careers and rich histories such as Larry Bell, Joe Goode and Lita Albuquerque, as well as the Estates of Bruce Conner, Wallace Berman and Charles Brittin. Finally, Kohn Gallery boasts an exciting roster of emerging and mid-career artists including Simmons & Burke, Ryan McGinness, Rosa Loy, Dennis Hollingsworth, Mark Ryden, Eddie Martinez, Tom LaDuke and Troika.

Visit kohngallery.com for the latest information on upcoming exhibitions.

Artwork: Simmons & Burke "Cognac X.O". Courtesy of the artist and Kohn Gallery, Los Angeles.

Join the "Simmons & Burke 'Dutch Masters'" conversation on social media by mentioning @KOHNGallery and using the #simmonsandburkeKOHN hashtag when posting.

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