

Clark V. Fox

Curated by *Mary Heilmann*

February 05 – March 28, 2009

(Opening reception Thursday, February 5, 6:00 – 8:00pm)

“His iconic imagery combines to convey a rich take on reality, the state of the world, our country, and his own unusual psychic identity and nature. The familiar images of JFK, phallic Planters Peanut man, big dimply oranges, Abe Lincoln, Chinese Characters, ears of corn, buffalo, maps, generic icons that are poetic stand-ins for much more than is seen, simile, metonymy, synecdoche.”

—Mary Heilmann

200 Nafta Oranges (detail), 2003-2008
Oil on canvas, 8" x 10" each



History painters have always faced the ordeal of navigating the murky waters of the past while immersed in the tumult of the present. New York-based artist Clark V. Fox comes to this challenge well prepared. Armed with a wide array of styles, ranging from Pop-Art to Romantic portraiture and Dutch still-life painting, Fox skillfully employs his media to depict a side of history not often told in the textbooks. Of Cherokee and Powhatan descent, and having spent many years living and working in Washington D.C., Fox has a uniquely keen, probing perspective on our Nation and its past that is both smart and fresh, particularly within our nation’s current political climate. Through a multitude of icons and imagery, he confronts American capitalist culture and its implications. While many of the images in his arsenal may insinuate the mass-produced and shallow, the painterly, lush surfaces and intense, vibrant colors of the works shed light on the immense amount of time the artist spends on both the work itself and learning about his subjects.

Clark’s series, *200 Nafta Oranges* (left) was begun after the North American Free Trade Agreement went into effect in 1994 – all modeled after fruit Fox purchased from a Mexican National on the side of the freeway. The humble commodity is given an elevated status through their individual treatment, vibrant backgrounds and pristine, glossy surfaces. Fox underlines the importance of such mundane items as oranges in international politics as well as how such items are imperative to an individual’s survival and identity. Each is done in the style of traditional still-life painting but, when arranged within a regimented grid, the effect is one of minimal abstraction, blurring the viewer’s initial perception – much like the perpetually swaying debate over the Agreement.

Habana Cuba / 26 Julio Shrine (right), named for the revolutionary movement that brought down the Cuban Batista government and eventually brought Fidel Castro to power, is a perfect example of Fox’s use of mixed media and imagery. Weaving personal symbols with corporate icons such as Coca Cola and Planters Mr. Peanut (the ultimate empty shell), the diorama-type boxes serve as enigmatic markers for monumental moments in recent history. While sifting through the visual clutter of the work, one gains an appreciation for the artist’s beautiful treatment of texture and pattern. Like all of his work, the shrines require the viewer to take their time absorbing them visually, while at the same time providing substance for them to muse over in relation to each event or person being memorialized.



Habana Cuba / 26 Julio Shrine (detail), 1982-83
Oil on wood and bronze, 24" x 30" x 6"

On view at CUE Art Foundation, Fox’s first solo exhibition in New York for over thirty years, are over 300 works, widely ranging in dates, media and subjects. Yet, despite the abundance of work, Clark’s resolve remains consistent – he masterfully holds a mirror in front of the American psyche, cleverly persuading the viewer to re-evaluate what they see.

(More, over)

For additional information, please contact Ryan Thomas, Programs Coordinator, CUE Art Foundation, 212-206-3583, or email ryan.thomas@cueartfoundation.org

Free catalogues available.

Exhibition-related Programming:

Saturday, February 7th, 4:00-6:00pm

This event is FREE but RSVPs required

Email ryan.thomas@cueartfoundation.org or call 212-206-3583 to reserve a seat.

Please join us for the screening of two films in which CUE exhibiting artist, Clark V. Fox was principally involve and starred: *Wooden Horses* (approx. 13 mins), a neo-situationist piece by Christian Dautresme; and *A Taste of Desperation* (approx. 90 mins.), a neo-film noir piece by Mark Byrne and co-starring cult film star, Conrad Brooks.

ARTIST'S BIO:

Clark V. Fox started making art full time in Houston, TX at age 5 and never slowed down since. Fox studied with Japanese art master Unichi Hiratsuka (1895-1997) in the early 1960's. He took a figure drawing class with the painter, Lennart Anderson (American, 1928-) in Brooklyn 1965-1966, painted on projects with the color field painters, Gene Davis (American, 1920-1985) and Thomas Downing (American, 1928-1985), but is largely self taught. Any idea of organized education was abandoned to work against the war in Vietnam. He copied portrait paintings at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. His work is in numerous museums and public and private collections including the National Gallery of Art, Corcoran Museum of Art, Phillips Collection, Katzen Museum of the American University, The George Washington University, and The Library of Congress, The National Museum of American Art, The Smithsonian Institution, and The Washington Post Art Collection, Washington, D.C.; The Carnegie Institute Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; The Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York, NY; The Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; The Palm Desert Museum, Palm Springs, CA; The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA, Washington & Lee University, Lexington, VA; The Delaware Museum of Art, Wilmington, DE; Jane Vorhees Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University, Brunswick, NJ; and Monclair Museum of Art, Monclair, NJ. This exhibition at CUE Art Foundation marks Fox's first solo show in New York in thirty years.

About CUE:

CUE Art Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit forum for contemporary art and cultural exchange that provides opportunities and resources for under-recognized artists. We value the astonishing diversity of creativity that artists provide and the importance of their activity in the social context of the city.

CUE provides artists, students, scholars and art professionals resources at many stages of their careers and creative lives. Our programs include exhibitions, studio residencies, publications, professional development seminars, educational outreach, symposia, readings, concerts and performances. Since 2002, we have operated from our 4,500 square foot storefront venue in the heart of New York's Chelsea Arts District.

CUE exhibiting artists are chosen by their peers and a rotating group of advisors and curators from across the country. This pluralistic process ensures that CUE consistently offers diverse viewpoints from multiple disciplines of artistic practice.

Simply put, we give artists their CUE to take center stage in the challenging world of art.

Major program support is provided by The Accademia Charitable Foundation, Ltd., The Viking Foundation, Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro, The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, The Greenwall Foundation, The Foundation for Contemporary Arts, The Joan Mitchell Foundation, Holland & Knight Charitable Foundation, Inc., Milton & Sally Avery Arts Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and New York State Council on the Arts (a State Agency).



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