

ANNA ZORINA GALLERY

532 W 24 ST NYC NY 10011 TEL 212 243 2100

ROB THOM

Viscera Americana

October 29 – December 19 2020

Anna Zorina Gallery is pleased to announce *Viscera Americana*, Rob Thom's first exhibition with the Gallery. The show will feature the artist's latest works that celebrate absurdities and vulgarities of everyday life in America. Thom honors a captivatingly shameless approach to common and everyday practices of Americans as seen on TV and the internet with a nod to European tradition. His paintings bring to mind the surreal layerings of masters like Bruegel or Bosch while remaining compellingly contemporary and allegorical.

Upon close inspection, the frenzied yet banal scenes reveal the edge of chaos. In "*House of Tarnation*" Thom freezes the turning point of a backyard wrestling calamity. One figure suspends mid-dive from a tall ladder, another is about to get pummeled in a piledriver. Something here seems 'off' or just plain wrong. As the fighters rage on, the dogs on the porch of a single-windowed ramshackle seem more civilized than their primal and animalistic human friends. In the background guests or neighbors casually look on, sipping drinks, unconcerned with violence or societal norms.

Thom's paintings take on a uniquely timely perspective with our current crowd-induced fear as density and closeness now equate to reckless behavior. The artist casts a funhouse mirror on familiar media images, skewing the scene to compel the viewer to pause and consider what is actually happening. In "*Community Pool*", the normality of enjoying a warm day now brings into acute focus the negative connotations of overcrowded recreation. However, the artist represents moments that are untethered to any particular time with his warm seemingly-yellowed palette, suggesting a timelessness to human perplexity and failings. The wavy limbs and hyperbolic bellies seem to reflect the distorting effects of memory or possibly the shucking away of artistic rules in regards to conveying the human form. If there are protocols to live by they are certainly not being practiced in this community. Through Thom, we are welcomed into a realm steeped in a sense of nostalgia for a time of being brazenly frenetic together.

ROB THOM (b. 1975, Santa Barbara, CA) lives and works in Bainbridge Island, WA. He received his BFA from University of California, Santa Barbara in 1998 and his MFA from University of California in Los Angeles in 2004. His work has been featured in international exhibitions including shows at M+B Los Angeles, CA; China

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Art Objects Galleries, Los Angeles, CA; Peres Projects, Berlin, Germany; Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York; Hiromi Yoshii Gallery, Tokyo, Japan and Galerie Julius Hummel, Vienna, Austria. His work is held in numerous private and public collections including the Thomas J. Watson Library and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

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