

ANIMA MUNDI



Miles Cleveland Goodwin, Studio, 2024

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PRESS RELEASE

Miles Cleveland Goodwin

In The Belly of the Beast (Searching for a Heart)

EXHIBITION DATES: 30 March – 18 May 2024

PREVIEW EVENING: Friday 29 March, 7.00 - 9.00 PM

WHERE: Anima Mundi, Street-an-Pol, St Ives, Cornwall, TR26 2DS

WEBSITE: www.animamundigallery.com

'In The Belly of the Beast (Searching for a Heart)' is a three floor solo, exhibition from Miles Cleveland Goodwin, his first in the UK.

Miles Cleveland Goodwin's deeply rooted upbringing in the American South is of inescapable significance when viewing the extraordinary, phantasmagoric realism and haunting naturalism of his emotive and deeply personal artwork.

The artist frequently and unsentimentally evokes themes of nature, presence, solitude and mortality - conjuring a stark and ambivalent beauty of a place that is often simultaneously unsettling yet deeply soulful, evocative of what the Romantic poet Alfred Tennyson claimed as "red in tooth and claw". As Goodwin humbly states "My instinct is to salvage the forgotten and unappreciated and elevate the discarded. I want to paint things that have a spiritual integrity - paintings that attempt to show the truth of life. My painting is all that I have to let the world

"I feel like a wet seed wild in the hot blind earth" - William Faulkner

know how I feel. I'm not very good with other forms of communication. I feel a responsibility to be a public servant, to show you things with love, no doubt coloured by a melancholy soul."

Born in Biloxi, Mississippi and now living in Georgia in the Appalachian Mountains, Goodwin's form of 'Southern Gothic' authentically embraces familiarity with complex mystery and contradiction, where the seen and unseen reflect the tension and harmony which exists between realms of realism and the more supernatural. Goodwin's unsentimental vision reflects both personal and wider histories, truths and narratives, hinting at underlying and persistent trauma and struggle, where some of the ghosts that haunt the past, linger into the present. His symbolic visions never shy away from darker or more uncomfortable aspects or remnants of reality where the subject of slavery, racism, fear of the outside world, inequity, violence or the grotesque, could be addressed in an attempt to seek a form of transcendence, thus imbuing his works with an overriding sense of hope acquired through their ultimate seeking of truth. process of physical and metaphysical transformation. The disparate emotional effects of the universe we inhabit, allow us the potential to retreat or to transcend towards a greater sense of separation or a wider unity, where we and all become one.

*"There were two crows sat on a tree,
Lardy hip tie hoddy ho ho
There were two crows sat on a tree,
And they were black as crows could be.
Lardy hardy hip tie hoddy ho ho*

*The old he-crow said to his mate:
What shall we have to-day to eat?*

*There lies a horse in yonders lane,
Whose body has not very long been slain.*

*We'll press our feet on his breast-bone,
And pick his eyes out one by one."*

'The Two Crows' from 'Folk Songs of English Origin Collected in the Appalachian Mountains', sung by Ada Maddox, May 3, 1918

ABOUT MILES CLEVELAND GOODWIN

Miles Cleveland Goodwin was born in Mississippi and lives and works in Georgia, in the Appalachian Mountains, USA. He graduated from the Pacific Northwest College of Art in Oregon in 2007 with a BFA in painting and printmaking. His work has been widely exhibited in the US including at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, the Grace Museum and the Amarillo Museum of Art among and can be found in collections worldwide including the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans. 'In the Belly of the Beast (Searching for a Heart)' is his first solo exhibition at Anima Mundi.

ABOUT ANIMA MUNDI

Anima Mundi was founded by Joseph Clarke, who has curated in excess of 100 exhibitions over a twenty year period, working with international artists in all media. The gallery is based in a former Christian Science reading rooms in St Ives, Cornwall which was converted in to a significant gallery space. The space is one of the largest outside of London which has helped to secure Anima Mundi's international reputation for representing the very best in Contemporary art. Since its creation, Anima Mundi has strived to offer its international collectors unique access to a diverse offering of contemporary art whilst supporting its artists through collaborations with museums and art centres around the world.

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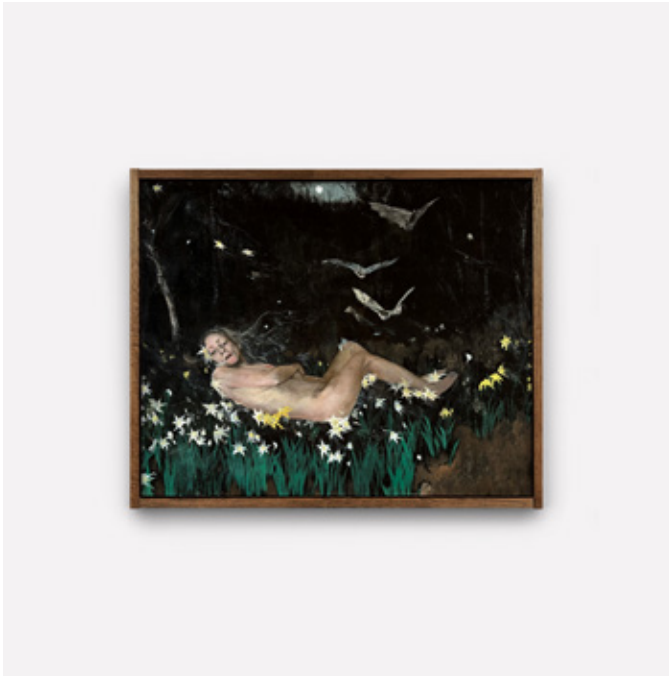
'Sunday', oil on linen, 122 x 61 cm

"This started out as a painting of an apple orchard on a clear windy day in January. I worked with it for a while and decided it needed some sort of figurative element in it. I initially painted a scene with an older man as a caretaker for this girl, like a scene in a dysfunctional family or something... it was a little creepy so I decided to just use the girl and added some donkeys. There is such a sense of peace I get when man and his machines aren't about."



'Afterlife in the Garden', oil and blood on panel, 46 x 61 cm

"I've had an ongoing theme in my work, over the years, of trying to repurpose something's existence be it symbolically or physically. I did this in this instance with a rabbit that my dog had killed. I wanted to capture the beautiful colour of blood, so I skinned the rabbit on this particular panel that I had gessoed white. I then sealed the blood with varnish and painted a memorial to the rabbit - It's afterlife in the garden."



'Narcissus', oil on linen, 61 x 76 cm

"Spring wakes from its long dark sleep to cradle the figure born anew"



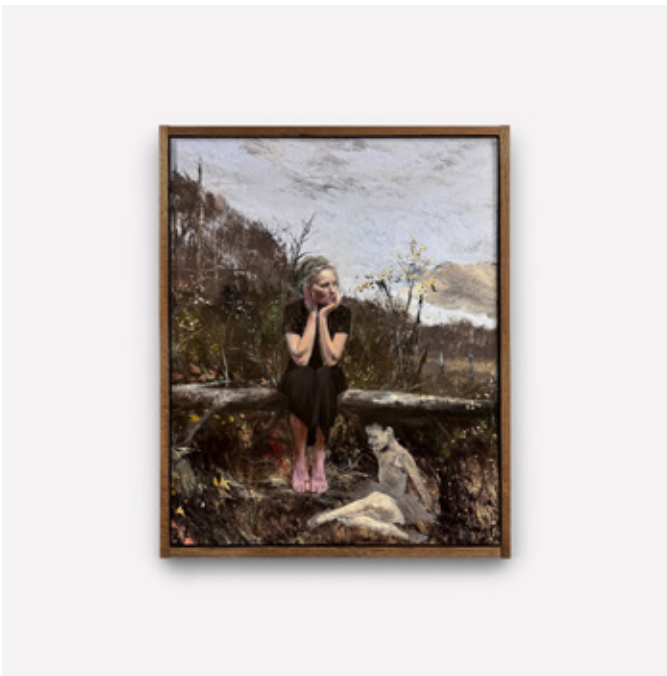
'Night Watch', oil on panel, 50 x 61 cm

"I wanted to experiment with painting something at night, guided by the dim light of the moon. It was a great joy to do so. This is my hound dog Venus protecting the cows that we know from down the road. I recently found out that she is three part hound."



'Country Church', mixed media on linen, 76 x 122 cm

"My uncle had a farm in north Mississippi for a while, and on that farm before he had it, years back, lived a family of slaves. The tiny house they lived in was 5 foot by nothing yet still had remnants within which were rotting away deep in the pines. When I visited him I would always go to this abandoned house and gather things that I could reuse. The particular shirt that forms the body of the church in the painting was found in the wall. Their house became a church of sorts to my creativity. The graveyard around the



'Hallucinations', oil on linen, 76 x 61 cm

"This painting owes its genesis to a painting by Huges Merle titled 'The Lunatic of Etretat' painted in 1871 where in the painting the troubled subject cradles an inmate object as if it is an infant. In my painting, I used an hallucination to reflect the subject confused twisted mind. The scene is late autumn in the southern Appalachians. I'm still learning about this one..."



'Prodigal Son', oil on linen, 61 x 91 cm

"I've been trying to paint this story from the Bible for years, looking for the right space but never captured it until I thought to introduce the horse which acts in place of the family, drooling on the poor man beneath. As if nature is saying, It's part of the process of achievement to fail, to be drooled on. It's funny to me that the man is actually playing with the spit, seemingly unaffected by it."



'The Mermaid', oil on linen, 61 x 81 cm

"Back in the early 2000's I lived in the state of Oregon. It's a wonderfully rugged land... I wanted to set up a painting space with that particular coastline in mind. I was trying to feel my way for a subject when the figure just sort of appeared. I love how this woman wants to be free from the bindings of the world, to escape into the sea, to become a mermaid."



'The Black Unicorn', mixed media on linen, 68 x 122 cm

"Many paintings in this exhibition show my connections to the mythic in art. A connection I have with a sense of escape from the physical presented to us in this day to day of our existence. I want to travel to another place sometimes. A place that knows only that which creates it. This painting is about beauty. Beauty is best shown when the malnourished are given its strength." church in the painting was fashioned after a church graveyard about 10 miles down the road from it."



'Funeral (Carrying Sticks)', oil on linen, 76 x 102 cm

"We had a service for my uncle Eugene under an old oak tree in the rain. Everyone was wet and cold. We all began throwing his ashes on the land, where some even coated the Springer Spaniels, Buddy and Duke. In the painting I put the family in a grave yard that exists at the entrance to my current neighbourhood. "