



Views

NEW YORK by Bob Nickas

186

Bob Nickas is a writer and curator based in New York.

Studio visit

McDermott & McGough
 Studio visit, Brooklyn

Here I was given a preview of an upcoming show in New York and an installation for a survey at the Dallas Museum of Contemporary Art by this collaborative team, together for more than thirty years, with new works turning on retrospect and defiance. The paintings to be shown in the fall at the New York gallery James Fuentes are propelled by a deep sense of anger about the humiliations and tortures inflicted upon LGBT persons in the country today. (Shock therapy to “cure” gay teenagers? What year are we living in, 1956?) Quoting from their paintings of the 80s, they redirect what may have once been perceived as harmless self-mockery – epithets such as *queer, mary, cocksucker* – toward an indictment of regressive assault, for what is the most queer behavior in America at present? The concerted efforts to roll social progress back to the dark ages. As part of the show in Dallas, they conceived their own “Stations of the Cross,” with Oscar Wilde as its central figure. Wilde is identified as C33, his cell number in prison and how he signed letters during his incarceration, serving two years’ hard labor for acts of gross indecency in 1895. Originally conceived for the chapel at Lismore Castle in Ireland, the project was canceled due to hostile reaction from locals: a hundred and twenty years later, Wilde continues to get under people’s skin.