

# LOIS LAMBERT GALLERY

at Bergamot Station  
2525 Michigan Ave E3  
Santa Monica, CA 90404

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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"Descent"  
Acrylic on Canvas, 60" x 40"



"Jack of Hearts"  
Acrylic on Canvas, 40" x 30"

## MARTIN BRUINSMA

### Noir

July 14th, 2018 – September 1st, 2018

Opening reception Saturday, July 14th, 6-9pm

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SANTA MONICA, CA – The Lois Lambert Gallery presents "Noir", a new body of work by Martin Bruinsma. In these paintings and drawings, Martin Bruinsma has adopted the visual aesthetic of classic Film Noir, staging shadowed scenes with mysterious subjects. Martin Bruinsma asserts: "When one studies history and reads literature, it's fascinating how we as humans are so unchanged. We are driven by emotions, both lofty and evil."

Before studying art, Bruinsma studied psychobiology, the study of the biological processes that effect behavior. Bruinsma's interest in behavior continues in his artistic practice. In "Noir", Bruinsma explores expressions of masculinity and power. His subjects' body language suggests that these are ideals whose embodiment can have dangerous results. Conflict, fatalism, and menace were what earned the the genre of Film Noir its name.

Bruinsma uses impasto and thin washes of acrylic paint on his canvases. Bruinsma concedes that the role of art and literature was often to codify behavior. Our cautionary tales and embattled heroes reveal the ways in which our own behavior is culturally prescribed. The themes of deceit, betrayal, desire and revenge found in classical mythology dominate the genre of noir. This resonates with the artist in today's cultural and political climate. Bruinsma reflects: "Film Noir captured that sense of the system being rigged against the little guy. These days it feels like a return to that situation." Power is misused, and power is taken.

Bruinsma is careful to establish his paintings and drawings as situated in a time separate from our own. Their dreamlike quality and painterly ambiguity establish them not as recordings of historical events, but as a 20th century mythology with persisting relevance.

Bruinsma, influenced by Edward Hopper, has a deep respect for stillness. But while Hopper's pervasive sense of quiet is often one of

calm, Bruinsma's darkened canvases seem like crime scenes. The massive classic cars sit motionless, obscured in shadows. Traditional iconographic masculinity and the symbols of its virility loom, but they haunt, not threaten. Bruinsma emphasizes a man's descent down the stairs, highlighting his excitement in contrast to the darkness of his descent. Another man glances downward with a dejected expression before closing the scissor-gate door on an old-fashioned elevator. A suited figure emerges from the darkness to be cut in half by glaring beams of headlights. As seen in classic Film Noir, the displays and struggles for masculine power can be as futile as they are destructive. Our dark impulses persist, but so does the crucial need to explore and understand what drives them.



"Still"  
Acrylic on Canvas, 24" x 36"

This is Martin Bruinsma's first exhibition with the Lois Lambert Gallery. He received his BFA in Illustration from the Art Center College of Design and studied psychobiology at UCLA.



"Big Daddy"  
Acrylic on Canvas, 40" x 60"



"Threshold"  
Acrylic on Canvas, 40" x 60"