

ROBERTS & TILTON

Flash Art

"Faris McReynolds, Roberts & Tilton"

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LOS ANGELES

FARIS McREYNOLDS

ROBERTS & TILTON

With "Oh Dead Air," his third exhibition at Roberts & Tilton, the young painter Faris McReynolds displays significant progress in confidence, skills and sheer kinetic exuberance. Titled after an anagram of the band Radiohead, the show features five large oil-on-canvas figurative paintings that explore a world of simmering intensity, rich with motion, where characters lose self-control, leading to riotous displays of aggressive and chaotic behavior.

Being weaned on a diet of '80s comedies provided McReynolds with much of his source material: the movie images are processed through the appropriation blender, a film to video to digital to paint mix where all original context is lost, and a new life is established as painting, except for a familiar pop culture sense of déjà vu.

Utilizing an impasto technique of thick, bold brush strokes and pain-knife scrapes, McReynolds' distinctive and studied mash-ups recall the playful virtuosity of Dana Schutz, intermingled with the motifs and palette of impressionists Manet and Cezanne, and with Van Gogh's dizzying perspectives.

In *The Crowl Pleasers* (all works are dated 2006), the central focus is the black bowler hat of a cabaret entertainer shown on stage from the rear, hanning it up with his/her tightly-wound partner to the amusement of a group of rapt, idol-stricken fans whipped up into a gushing frenzy. The intriguing *The Falling Family*, possibly set outside a European bistro, features two helmet-



FARIS McREYNOLDS, *The Falling Family*, 2006. Oil on canvas, 117 x 193 cm. Courtesy Roberts & Tilton, Los Angeles. Photo: Anthony Calha.

clad characters, like Orwellian military police, going ballistic on a helpless soul, their bodies intertwining and faces twisted and obscured. And *Blood Sugar Boy* features a young man — a Chris Farley doppelgänger — whose obese body multiplies as he hyperactively bounces around his suburban living room in a mad sugar-rush, the off-kilter perspectives and complimentary colors heightening the action.

These disparate works evoke many questions, but like all significant art works they offer new discoveries upon repeat viewing.

Alex Worman