



David Bailin



Matt Duffin



Michael O'Keefe

An exhibition presented by
the UNT Galleries at the
University of North Texas

MARKING A COURSE

**February 18 –
March 29, 2014**

Marking a Course is an exhibition of figurative artworks that convey meaning through distinct mark making. While subjects differ, each artist's approach includes an element of paradox, through humor, absurdity, temporality or chance. With gesture and line, these artists create characters as stand-ins for ideologies, histories, and expressions. The result is a journey through the many facets of being human.

David Bailin's early experience in New York theater informs his characters and their scenes as situations connected to or imagined in the dream process. Bailin lives and works in Central Arkansas. Matt Duffin's narrative, inward-looking encaustic paintings combine a desire for perspective drawing with themes of solitude and irony. A native Texan, Duffin lives and works in Northern California. Michael O'Keefe sees the figure as an essential form of expression and seeks a new visual language to compose the human form. O'Keefe lives and works in North Texas.

Tracee W. Robertson
Director, UNT Galleries

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David Bailin



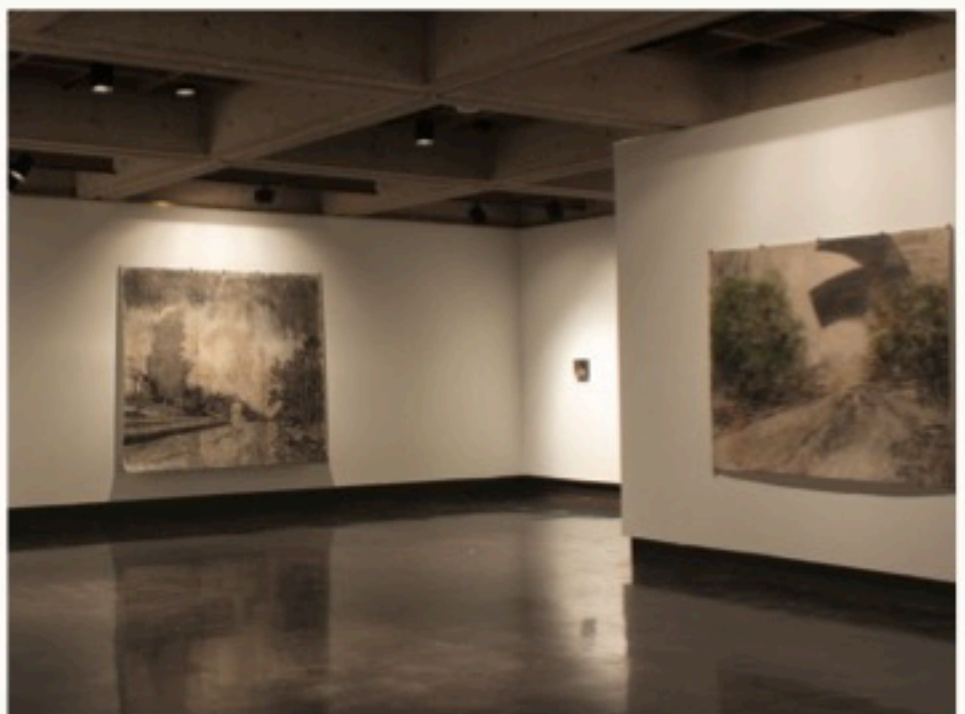
David Bailin's fascination with the momentary circumstance of the person defines his drawing practice, which is born of a desire to wrestle with and tell a story. In each thematic series Bailin develops, this narrative functions as an allegorical testimony of the effects of familial, cultural, and political histories on perception and impetus. Responding to a Russian Jewish ancestry and contemporary American politics, Bailin shoulders a self-described paranoia and questioning, juxtaposed with a passion for a personal vision of justness. Inspired by the stories of Franz Kafka (1883-1924) and contemporary novelist Haruki Murakami (the profoundly infinite effects of one's actions), Bailin fashions his narrative scenes with a character, a set, and a "piece of business," as he calls it. These elements invite viewers, through beautiful and frenetic marks on paper, to recognition, humor, empathy and finally to a foreboding sense of shared experience in the point Bailin makes.

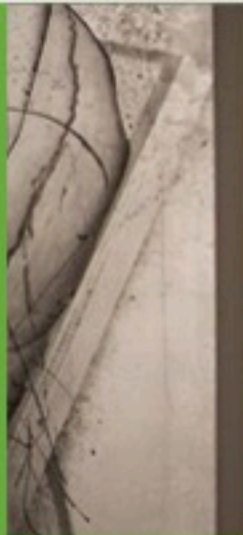
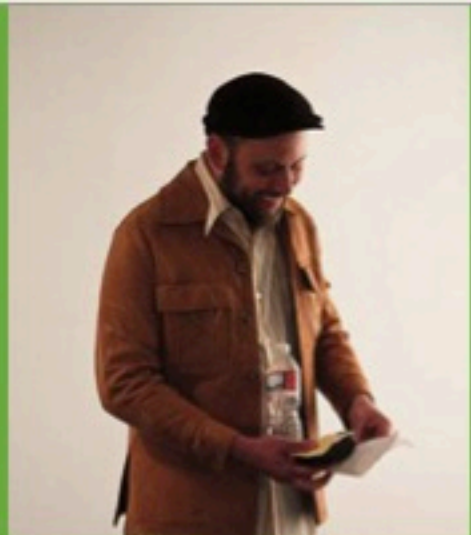


The person or persona and his narrative circumstance may originate for Bailin from an inner struggle, something witnessed, or more recently, a revelation brought about in a dream. Bailin's studio contains boxes of magazine and newspaper images of people, whose stories can be derived from their clothing, gestures, stances, and settings. These become his models and set the stage in his drawings. Characters in the series *Dreams and Disasters* engage in actions that represent fanciful and self-preserving responses to uncertainty. More abstract in their narratives than previous compositions, these drawings offer a reading that may include humor, through a blunt relationship between the title of the artwork and the figure's "piece of business," but more likely reveals unease, for which we as viewers have myriad explanations.



Bailin seeks an experience of struggle in making the work, as if he is in dialogue with his character, who argues with Bailin about the situation in which the artist puts him but ultimately accepts or settles into his circumstance. In Bailin's hands the mark of charcoal expresses directness and dynamism, both as the artist makes the mark and as the viewer reads it. As the story unfolds in the artist's studio, marks and forms are placed and erased and placed again, sometimes so much that a hue emerges from the residue of medium, which itself lends meaning to the scene. Bailin's lines, like his stories, convey unrest and yet have a softness and sense of order that reveal an underlying appropriateness—that all is right in the moment.





David Bailin

Block, 2013

Charcoal, oil, pastel and coffee on prepared paper
73 x 83 inches

Yellow Lines, 2013

Charcoal, oil, pastel and coffee on prepared paper
72.5 x 83 inches

Drift, 2013

Charcoal, oil, pastel and coffee on prepared paper
72.5 x 61 inches

Raincoat, 2013

Charcoal, oil, pastel and coffee on prepared paper
84 x 95 inches

Courtesy the artist and Koplin Del Rio Gallery, Culver City, CA; photography by Cindy Momchilov, Camera Work, Little Rock, AR

Matt Duffin

High Noon, 2008

Encaustic Wax
16 x 16 inches

Keeping Time, 2008

Encaustic Wax
16 x 16 inches
On loan from Wanda Campbell

Together Forever, 2008

Encaustic Wax
8 x 17 inches

Lying in Weight, 2008

Encaustic Wax
12 x 12 inches

Greener Grass, 2008

Encaustic Wax
8 x 8 inches
On loan from Wanda Campbell

Cornered, 2008

Encaustic Wax
6 x 6 inches

Tried and True, 2011

Encaustic Wax
16 x 16 inches

Cock and Bull Story, 2007

Encaustic Wax
24 x 24 inches

Michael O'Keefe

Submitted Memorials, Won Little Praise; My Wishes Are Not Yet Realized, 2013

Plaster
120 inches high

The Genius and the Slave, 2010

Oil and ink on canvas
72 x 56 inches

Dare the Intersection of Great Waters, 2011

Ink and acrylic on canvas
75 x 60 inches

Courtesy the artist and Valley House Gallery, Dallas, TX

The UNT Galleries exhibition program in the UNT College of Visual Arts and Design presents curatorial, student and faculty projects involving contemporary art, which strive to challenge and promote the current discourse surrounding living artists and their works.

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UNT Galleries
University of North Texas
1155 Union Circle #305100
Denton, TX 76203-5017
www.gallery.unt.edu

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