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## **Kim Dorland: Nemophilia**

September 8 to October 14, 2017

Equinox Gallery, Vancouver

Reception for the artist: Thursday September 7<sup>th</sup>, 6 to 8pm

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Equinox Gallery is very pleased to present ***Nemophilia***, an exhibition of new paintings by Kim Dorland. Based in Vancouver since 2015, Dorland's relationship to painting draws from myriad of lineages including Emily Carr, Tom Thomson, Jack Shadbolt, and the German Expressionists. Over a career spanning two decades, Dorland has developed a distinctive approach to painting, gradually refining a personal palette and vocabulary of images derived primarily from observations of the natural world and the tensions that manifest themselves when nature comes into confrontation with the urban experience. *Nemophilia* epitomizes Dorland's unyielding exploration of the possibilities found in painting as a material meditation on the profound power of the woods.

The title of the exhibition is a compound word conceived by the artist that combines two Greek words: *nemo*, meaning wooded pasture and *philia*, meaning fondness or love. The term *nemophilist* is most commonly used as a way to define someone who has an appreciation for the forest or the woods, but it can also be used to denote a haunter of the woods. Within popular culture, *nemophile* has camp connotations as it is used to describe those who consume lumberjack culture as a way to access the stereotype of the rugged, outdoorsy strong man without having to truly engage with the natural world. For this exhibition, Dorland invokes the term in all of its possible meanings as a way to capture the dichotomies associated with the word: reverence, awe, posture, and the subsequent emotive qualities associated with the forest. The nemophile is even brought forward in a self-portrait, allowing the artist to keep watch over the contrasting elements of the exhibition.

In the series entitled *Nemophilia*, Kim Dorland expands the expressive range of his dueling sentiments about the forest by portraying it as a delirious world in which the forest is alternately (and cumulatively) a place of curiosity, fear, bewilderment, wonder, and power. The raw strength of the forest comes through in Dorland's furious and pulsing application of paint and the intense crowding of pigment and colour. The paintings from the *Nemophilia* series push the limits of reality, engulfing the viewer in the formidable psychological experience of entering the unknown.

In juxtaposition to the *Nemophilia* series are three works that touch on the ways that humans endeavor to control nature. Fences, sandbags, vases, even paintings within

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paintings point to how we interrupt and mediate the experience of the natural world while also hoping to experience the fullness of it. These three works also include digital elements, whereby Dorland initiates the painting process on a digital tablet. The digital underpaintings are printed directly onto canvas and then reworked using established painting materials and techniques. The result is a paradoxical mash up of mark-making processes, and in these works rise the tensions between digital and painterly, system and intuition, compression and expansion, ultimately throwing into question our expectations of how painting can evolve in a digitally dominated world. Dorland's desire to push the limits of paint has created a visual language that entices the viewer into an enigmatic world that transforms visceral experience into a language of paint.

Born in 1974 in Wainwright, Alberta Kim Dorland received his BFA from Emily Carr University of Art + Design and his MFA from York University. Dorland has exhibited extensively, both nationally and internationally including exhibitions in New York, Toronto, Milan, Montreal, Chicago, and Los Angeles. His work is featured in the Contemporary Art Foundation (Japan); Sander Collection (Berlin); Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art (KS); Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; Montreal Museum of Contemporary Art, Blanton Museum of Art (TX); Glenbow Museum (Calgary); Art Gallery of Alberta; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, and numerous private collections. In 2015, Dorland was the focus of a solo exhibition at the MCA Denver. His work was recently featured in two significant group exhibitions: *O Canada* at Beers Gallery, UK and *Ambivalent Pleasures* at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Kim Dorland lives and works in Vancouver.