

## NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

### THE PROMISED LAND

#### A NEW EXHIBITION BY MITCH GRIFFITHS

29 APRIL – 5 JUNE 2010



*Consumption*



*Flag Bearer's Daughter*



*The Muse is Dead*

There will be 25 new paintings by Mitch Griffiths on display at Halcyon Gallery, 24 Bruton Street, Mayfair, London from 29 April - 31 May 2010.

Griffiths uses a traditional, almost forgotten style of painting, inspired by the light and composition of Old Master paintings, but he uses this style to depict the issues concerning 21st-century British society. His main subject is the transient and throwaway nature of contemporary culture, which is held in stark contrast to the permanence and indelibility of oil paint on canvas.

Griffiths says: *“Once you paint a MacDonald’s burger box in oil paint, it becomes important and immortal. It’s a permanent mark of the disposable.”*

This exhibition references 21<sup>st</sup>-century Britain and, taking the Union Jack as the recurring theme, it explores the inflammatory nature of what the flag represents alongside what Griffiths perceives to be the overriding concerns of today’s society: consumerism and self-obsession followed by the need for redemption.

# HALCYON GALLERY

These large-scale oil on canvas portraits depict disturbing scenes of modern life with often alarming realism and candour. *The Muse is Dead* takes the classical image of the muse and immediately unsettles any preconceptions the viewer may have of this historic figure. The muse, who is being simultaneously cradled and grabbed by two paparazzi and a surgeon, deals with the ephemeral nature of celebrity and the shortening attention span of a society which idolises a person or an object one minute and quickly discards it the next.

*The Flag Bearer's Daughter* depicts a girl wrapped in the British flag with a distressed yet defiant air. The viewer can only speculate as to what kind of trauma she has endured and whether the black marks on her face are smudged makeup or in fact the remnants of war paint. Is the flag providing a comfort or was it the cause of the suffering? Perhaps the girl is a personification of Britain? Patriotism is a subject which fascinates Griffiths – his particular concern is the widespread discrepancy between what people perceive it to be and what it actually is.

The iconographic composition of *Consumption*, which shows a man preparing to hang himself while holding Tesco bags filled with empty plastic bottles, draws the mind to notions of sacrifice and religion. On his face an expression of rapture suggests that he is looking forward to relinquishing the trappings of material life.

Mitch Griffiths is one of the UK's most accomplished artists whose captivating and expressive portraits have been widely recognised through art prizes including the BP Portrait Award. His remarkable talent has attracted an international following with celebrity portrait commissions and sell-out shows.

Paul Green, president of Halcyon Gallery said: "*Mitch's long-awaited show this spring is an important punctuation in his career. It builds up to the Iconostasis exhibition in 2012, which will include portraits of famous faces including Ray Winstone and Keira Knightley and which is set to be a blockbuster show.*"

## **Contact information:**

For further press information or high resolution images for publication please contact Anna Kirrage at Halcyon Gallery on 020 7647 8327 or [akirrage@halcyongallery.com](mailto:akirrage@halcyongallery.com)

## **Notes to Editors:**

### **Mitch Griffiths**

Griffiths started drawing at a young age. Having had no formal fine art education, he totally immersed himself in the culture of the Old Masters, read books on art history, made frequent visits to the National Gallery to study the masterpieces in detail and taught himself how to use oil paints.

In 2002 he held his first solo show in London at the Enid Lawson gallery in Kensington. Paul Green, president and founder of Halcyon Gallery visited the exhibition and subsequently contacted Griffiths to discuss a formal working arrangement. Halcyon Gallery started representing Griffiths permanently in 2004.

# HALCYON GALLERY

Griffiths says: *"When someone sees something special in your work, when they share your vision, it galvanizes your self belief in what you're trying to achieve. Working with Halcyon Gallery has given me the opportunity to strive for what is most important to me: to create the best art I can."*

His first show at Halcyon Gallery in 2006 was a sell out.

## **Halcyon Gallery**

Situated in the heart of Mayfair, London, Halcyon Gallery is one of Europe's leading art galleries representing some of the finest artists and sculptors working today. Halcyon Gallery is committed to supporting and nurturing outstanding living artists, specialising in fine art and master graphics as well as original paintings, drawings and sculpture.

Halcyon Gallery's magnificent five-storey flagship gallery at 24 Bruton Street opened in 2008, joining the original gallery at 29 New Bond Street. Both spaces hold important exhibitions of iconic modern masterpieces and new work by eminent contemporary artists throughout the year. For further information please visit:

[www.halcyongallery.com](http://www.halcyongallery.com)

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Free entry