

JAMES KELLY CONTEMPORARY - PRESS RELEASE  
550 S. Guadalupe St. - Santa Fe, NM 87501 - 505.989.1601

# Nic Nicosia

## *In the Absence of Others*

Opening Reception: Friday, June 29, 5:00-7:00 pm  
Exhibition Dates: June 29 - August 4, 2012  
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Nic Nicosia, *so thinking busy*, 2011  
Archival Inkjet on Somerset Watercolor Paper, 24 x 36 inches unframed

James Kelly Contemporary is pleased to present *In the Absence of Others*, an exhibition of new photographs and sculpture by Nic Nicosia. This will be Nicosia's third show at the gallery.

*Nic Nicosia: In the Absence of Others*, will open with a reception for the artist on Friday, June 29, 2012, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. The exhibition will continue through August 4, 2012.

The show will consist of approximately sixteen new black and white photographs of varying sizes and an installation of small figurative sculptures.

Nicosia grew up in Dallas, Texas, and moved to Santa Fe in 2004. His early training as a filmmaker enhanced his understanding of creating a narrative with a movie camera and allowed him to take this skill and apply it to still photography. He emerged in the early 1980s with a series of lens-based works that employed the use of the narrative by telling an entire story with one image. Nicosia used various methods to illustrate the story by building elaborate sets, painted backdrops, and stylized costumes, to create and photograph scenes that are deliberately artificial. This method of creating an image by constructing an artificial reality quickly became Nicosia's trademark.

Often working in series, Nicosia found that the serial format allowed for the exploration of diverse techniques for creating artificial realities. The three photographic series made just prior to this new one, *In the Absence of Others*, chronicled his desire to illustrate the fundamentals of art making. Initially, Nicosia focused on the act of drawing, of the artist in the studio with a blank slate, in this case, a blank wall. He positioned himself in this white void of a studio and then began drawing to fill the void. In these photographs the artist is shown in the act of drawing, the foundation of making art.

His next series dealt with painting and light. He made small-scale diorama-like spaces by using boxes, fabric, wood, paper, cardboard and paint. These small spaces when photographed and enlarged in printing confused the issue of scale. The viewer is not fully at ease with what is shown, the scale could be life-size or miniature. Nicosia further complicated the photographs by involving light, creating cast shadows. He even allowed the light source to be visible in several photographs; frequently a simple flashlight provided the light.

Following these investigations into drawing, painting and light, Nicosia turned to sculpture in this new series, *In the Absence of Others*. He molds men with skinny clay bodies, often with outsized hands and feet, creating surreal figures that seem to fight, dream, point or accuse. Again, these figures occupy small diorama-like spaces illustrating once more a narrative that only the artist can fully understand. As with his previous work over his long career, Nicosia continues his practice of "making pictures".

*In the Absence of Others* will include an audio component as part of the exhibition. Nicosia wrote a musical composition for violin that will be heard simultaneously while viewing the exhibition at the reception and throughout the show.

"Seeing, knowing, and experiencing Nic Nicosia's artwork for the last 30 years has made me a deep admirer of his unique vision, meticulous technique and fearless focus on the next. Just as I believe I am certain of his artistic trajectory he moves in a fresh, unexpected, new direction. His relentless investigation and incorporation of all manner of media - video, film, sculpture, drawings,

installation, constructions and most recently his own composed and played music – attests to his restless curiosity as an artist.”

-Sue Graze, Director Emeritus, Arthouse, Austin, TX.

Nic Nicosia received a B.A. (Radio, TV, Film) at the University of North Texas and has received awards from Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, MAAA/NEA Fellowships in Photography, and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, among others.

His work is included in several museum collections: Dallas Museum of Art; High Museum, Atlanta; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent, Belgium; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; among others.

To be published in the fall of 2012 will be the definitive catalogue on Nicosia's career, eponymously titled, *NIC NICOSIA*, with interview by Sue Graze, text by Michelle White, fiction by Phillip Meyer, and published by the University of Texas Press.

James Kelly Contemporary is located at 550 S. Guadalupe, Santa Fe, NM 87501. Gallery hours for the duration of this show are Tuesday through Friday from 10:00-5:00 p.m. - Saturday from 11:00-5:00 p.m. - Monday by appointment. Please call Ylise Kessler at the gallery 505.989.1601 - fax 505.989.5005, or email [ylise@jameskelly.com](mailto:ylise@jameskelly.com) for more information.

High-resolution images available upon request