

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dominique Knowles

The Solemn and Dignified Burial Befitting My Beloved for All Seasons

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8th Floor

I wonder, do animals worry about falling off the edge of things? Do they see edges at all? Do they see an edge as an edge?

— Anne Carson

Dominique Knowles's work occupies the spectral plane between dreams and waking life. His debut at Greene Naftali expands the corpus of roiling landscapes for which he is known, laced with figurative elements in what he calls "a build-up of ritual, a sediment of memories." *The Solemn and Dignified Burial Befitting My Beloved for All Seasons* circles his recurring themes: forms of devotion, alchemy, loss, and a heightened attunement to animal being.

Painted in the French countryside, the new works on view mourn the artist's late horse and lifelong companion. A painter, poet, and accomplished equestrian, Knowles grew up around the stables, and a reverence for the bonds that can form between species animates his work. Each expanse of stretched linen teems with his signature brushwork, both ethereal and grounded—whorls of thinned paint in an earthen palette of ochre, umber, moss, and sandstone red. Horses appear in schematic outline or partial silhouette; horizon lines pulse like waves on the sea; a human-like figure either exits or immolates in a wall of flames. The pull of death in arcadia underlies what one critic calls Knowles's "necropastoral," haunting a genre typically concerned with nature's cultivation and mastery.¹

Knowles's painting practice also reworks the motif of the horse and rider: a staple in Western art from cave paintings to battle scenes and imperial portraits. Yet in his hands, those archetypes for nobility or state power "become metaphors for queer desire, or a quest for intimacy." Knowles has likened the act of painting a horse to that of grooming one—the muscle memory of care and concern for another transferred onto the canvas. A 2019 video work, *Tahlequah*, touches on similar themes, taking its name from a grieving orca who traveled thousands of miles carrying her stillborn calf. Using found footage of this and other instances of empathic connection among animals, *Tahlequah* aligns with Knowles's broader aim to dislodge the anthropocentric point of view. The paintings are a swirling lament for the kinship humans once had with other beings, and their hazy atmospherics—enhanced by the artist's prescribed sepia walls and spotlit works—admit a surprisingly frank encounter with death and its attendant transformations. Knowles holds fast to the fact of decay while remaining alert to its cathartic release: "I would go into [it] thinking of a burial," he has said of his process, "but it would come out a resurrection."

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Dominique Knowles (b. 1996, Nassau, Bahamas) lives and works in Brussels. His work is currently on view in the 12th SITE SANTA FE International, curated by Cecilia Alemani. Solo exhibitions have been held at Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles (2025, 2023); Kiang Malingue, Hong Kong (2024); Layr, Salzburg/Vienna (2023; 2021); Chapter, New York (2022); Soccer Club Club, Chicago (2020); The Green Gallery, Milwaukee (2019); and the National Gallery of the Bahamas (2017). His work has been featured in numerous group exhibitions, including the 15th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, South Korea (2024); Greene Naftali, New York (2024); White Columns, New York (2023); mumok, Vienna (2022); Misako & Rosen, Tokyo (2022); and Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York (2021); among others. Knowles's work is held in the permanent collections of mumok, Vienna, and the Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw. He received his MFA (2020) and BFA (2017) from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

¹ Mark Pierson, "Fielding the Necropastoral Exchange," *Texte Zur Kunst* 131 (September 2023); citing a term coined by the poet and theorist Joyelle McSweeney.