

In an explosion of vivid color and heroic gesture, Jack Leamy creates a mythology both idiosyncratic and universal in scope. Casting himself in a variety of roles, his characters blunder through a postmodern playground of painterly techniques and references extracted from across the trajectory of western art. At times, abstraction and figuration collide, challenging the hierarchy of the picture plane. In other moments a surprising harmony is achieved while he layers disparate visual elements with spontaneity, courage and skill. The resulting painted realm is a dreamscape of Process pours, Fauvist colors, Abstract Expressionist outbursts and Renaissance iconography where Leamy conducts an unremitting critique of our decadent culture.

The paintings begin with a performance in which Leamy acts out roles ranging from Captain Ahab to Goya inspired giants devouring herds of cattle. A recurring motif in his work, the Bigfoot costume symbolizes mankind's animalistic trappings despite endless struggles to achieve transcendence. In *Father and Son*, Bigfoot's noble pose alludes to the ivory statue of Zeus at Olympia and Ingres' seated portraits of Napoleon and Jupiter. The proud expression of the father is offset by the humorous presence of his son at his side wearing nothing but his oversized Bigfoot mask. The background is an earthy wash with scattered markings that suggest the cave paintings of Lascaux. Here we witness Leamy's conceptual breadth as he intertwines the history of art and civilization with the intimate anxieties of a father handing down a legacy of flaws to his son.

Peter Shepard Cole