

Paradise Row

Press Release

Justin Coombes
Urban Pastoral
07.09.07 - 30.09.07

In *Urban Pastoral*, Justin Coombes recreates the sense of romance, adventure and threat he found upon first moving to London after a childhood spent in the countryside.

Coombes's dense, allusive, large-format photographs are products of his direct interventions in the landscape: the subtle rearrangement or placement of people and objects to create scenes that are quietly emotive, with strong narratives and symbolism that nonetheless remain opaque to the viewer.

In one photograph, *Bully*, a group of kids assembles in a council estate playground, loitering with ambiguous intent. The mist of an early dawn shrouds the scene with a sense of melancholy distance. In another work, a recollection of the artist's mother landscaping her Devon garden is recreated on a South London allotment; tempestuous blue clouds, barbed wire fences, a scarecrow and looming tower blocks undercut the idyllic memory. In *Vanitas with Fox*, the urban predator is caught in the headlights of a car whilst foraging for food in some rubbish bags. A skull design on a cardboard box that the fox has torn open seems to augur both its own death and that of the driver. Other new photographs are incorporated into Coombes's short video and performance pieces, where the literary and historical aspects of his image making are brought to the fore. He is influenced by early Surrealist experiments in photography, as well as the work of contemporary artists such as Shimon Attie, Gregory Crewdson and Jeff Wall.

Private View	Thursday 6 September 2007, 6.30 - 9 pm
Show Dates	7 - 30 September 2007
Opening times	12 - 6 pm, Wednesday – Sunday
Web:	www.paradiserow.com
Entrance	St Matthew's Hall 17 Hereford St (off Cheshire St) London, E2 6EX
Mailing Address	2 Wood Close, London, E2 6ET
Press Contact	Nick Hackworth +44 (0) 20 7613 3311 / +44 (0) 7939 150 774