

## Odd Nerdrum

**Forum**

**Los Angeles**

With these dark and powerful paintings, Norwegian Odd Nerdrum operates in celestial territory. The 12 recent figurative works featured male and female nudes floating and zipping along in supernal blackness, and alluded to birth, death, mankind's origins, and biblical stories.

*Arrest* (2006) offers Nerdrum's take on Adam and Eve after the Fall, with the couple racing desperately through space. Eve clings to Adam's left arm, and four figures float around them, keeping watch but offering no guidance. Doom mixes with romance in *Drifting* (2006), as a male figure hovers suggestively above a woman, their wisps of clothing falling away like tendrils of light.

Nerdrum took a page from Goya's late-career dark period in several agonizing works. In *Head* (2006), a lone head zooms across a brown and black canvas, leaving a shock of white in its trail. *Red* (2006), a study in violence and tragedy, depicts a woman splashed with red who appears unable to hold or assist her vulnerable children.

*Burning* (2006), was perhaps the bleakest view of man's fate: against a vast, pitch-black cosmos, a tiny male figure floats, his head consumed by flames.

—Richard Chang



**Odd Nerdrum, *Head on the Table*, 2006,  
oil on canvas, 14<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 12<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>".**

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