

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Benjamin Butler
Trees
10 January through 14 February 2004

Team Gallery will present a solo show of new paintings by Benjamin Butler. Entitled "Trees", the exhibition will run from the 10th of January through the 14th of February 2004. The gallery is located at 527 West 26th Street, between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, on the ground floor.

Benjamin Butler's second solo show at Team continues the artist's explorations within a largely marginalized genre for young painters. While most emerging artists avoid the landscape, Butler revels in it and in this new body of paintings he limits his subject matter even further, while exploring a wide range of painterly affects. Butler's ability to negotiate the demarcation of representation and abstraction remains the driving force behind his practice. While his knowledge of the history of painting is evident, he resists being bound to any particular style, using van Gogh, Mondriaan, Klimt and Katz as touchstones for, respectively, emotion, the analytical, decoration and efficiency. Sixties psychedelic influences can also be seen as leaves transform into vibrant patterns overtaking trunks and branches.

In these new pictures, it is not only the valences of abstraction and figuration that remain ambiguous, it is also the image-ground relationship that acts as a space of negotiation; Butler's paint both creates an image and acts as interference in the successful reading of such. He simultaneously renders lush abstractions of forests, while producing stripped down gestures of Hallmark scenes. As he touches upon a variety of influences, high and low, he confounds one's expectations of both landscape and contemporary painting. Ultimately it is the sincerity of Butler's project which remains suspended in a faux space of ironic possibility. By turns, quaint and psychedelic, rigorous and improvised, Butler's tree paintings connect on an emotional level eschewing coldness and distance for a glimpse of the tender resonances of the banal.

Since his last New York solo, Butler had one-person exhibitions with Tomio Koyama in Tokyo and with Greener Pastures in Toronto. He has also participated in group shows at Thaddaeus Ropac in Salzburg, at Grimm/Rosenfeld in Munich and at 678 Echo Park Avenue in Los Angeles.

For further information and/or photographs please call the gallery at 212.279.9219. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am to 6pm.

Team Gallery is located at 527 West 26th Street (between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues) in the West Chelsea District, on the ground floor.