

# KANTOR / FEUER GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition dates: June 29 - July 29, 2006

## **BENJAMIN DEGEN**

"A Tree Is Falling

### **Project Room: Quentin Curry**

Kantor/Feuer Gallery is pleased to announce, "A Tree is Falling," the first Los Angeles solo exhibition for New York based artist Benjamin Degen. In these new paintings Degen isolates the basic elements of visual representation: people, places, things and thoughts. The individual components are stripped of specific identities and reconstituted in compositions that can simultaneously function as portraiture, landscape, still life and diagram. In doing so Degen creates a meta-space in the picture, which is not fixed in place but rather can shift from human space to land space to thought space.

Referencing Greek amphorae, Minoan paintings, Navajo rugs and Chinese landscape painting Degen composes objects that can be read in various ways. A body can be seen as a landscape or as typography. Text stripped of all meaning can begin to read like the patterns of nature. A geometric pattern becomes visual mathematics. The grain of wood can begin to read like text. In these meta-spaces all of the elements become reflections of each other. The composition becomes a floating space as the specific definitions of individual elements are replaced by a relative balance.

In "Lies and Abstraction" an opened newspaper rests on a hardwood floor. This paper written in both numbers and letters become illegible and is seen not only as text, but also as a diagram and a landscape. The focus of the piece does not lie in the meaning of the words on the paper; it becomes the form of the paper itself, the ambiguity of the letters, and the grain of the wood it is placed on. Not quite Cyrillic and not quite Latin, the viewer notices the contours of the letters, yet still realizes the object as a newspaper.

Benjamin Degen was born in 1976 in Brooklyn, New York. He received his BFA from the Cooper Union School of Art and Science in 1998, and also obtained a Yale Norfolk Painting Fellowship in 1997. Degen has had a solo exhibition at Guild & Greyshkul in New York and was featured in Greater New York at PS1 Contemporary Art Center.

Quentin Curry paints images of the aftermath of everyday disasters. Using sentimental image, his paintings provide a deeply layered, apocalyptic vision of a not too distant future (or past). His works shift in palate and surface quickly. The paintings face are often dominated by a thick and grainy texture made by applying pigment to the painting through the weave of various fabrics. His use of the weave can also be seen in his compositions, which bring together often-dispart scenes and characters to create his subjects.

Born in 1972, Quentin Curry received his education at Bard College in New York and The San Francisco Art Institute. He will be featured in upcoming group shows at Stellan Holm Gallery and Stephen Stux in New York as well as Kavi Gupta in Chicago. He also has a scheduled solo show in 2007 with Stellan Holm Gallery. Curry lives and works in New York.

The exhibition opens June 29th and will run through August 5th, 2006. An opening reception will be held on Thursday, June 29 from 6:00 – 9:00 pm. Valet parking will be available during the reception. For more information about the gallery please visit [www.kantorfeuer.com](http://www.kantorfeuer.com).

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Tuesday - Saturday 10 - 6 pm