

RYAN LEE

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Christopher Cook: A Sign of Things to Come

527 West 26th Street

October 10 – November 16, 2013

Opening: Thursday, October 10, 6-8PM

RYAN LEE is pleased to present *Christopher Cook: A Sign of Things to Come*, featuring work initiated during a residency in 2011 at Langgeng Foundation, Jogjakarta, Indonesia and completed during a fellowship at Bogliasco Foundation, Genoa, Italy earlier this year. Since 2003, Cook has worked with liquid graphite – a technique involving graphite powder dissolved in resin and solvents – applied to aluminum and coated paper. In this new body of work, Cook employs a more automatic process to override predetermined ideas and generate less arbitrated compositions. A catalog with original texts by Tim Manley, author and illustrator of *Fairy Tales for Twenty Somethings*, and literary theorist Lauren Shohet of Villanova University accompanies the exhibition.

Cook cites artist Henry Krokatsis philosophical assertion that “By putting ourselves in situations where rationality is forced to give way to instinct, we can learn more about who we are and why we react to things the way we do.” In order to achieve this element of pure instinct, Cook allows gravity and unlikely implements to influence the final outcome of the work. Due to the quick-drying nature of this medium, the additive and subtractive mark-making is produced through a series of performative gestures that investigate the relationship between predetermined ideas and random occurrence.

Cook draws on traditions of Eastern landscape painting and calligraphy, but equally importantly on Surrealist methods of play, serendipity, and recognition. Previously he has explored encapsulated spaces, in psychologically charged interiors of empty theaters, highway tunnels, and the ‘static motion’ of waterfalls. The result is a highly evocative image accomplished through an economy of mark-making. The main wall of the exhibition is designed to reveal a non-narrative, non-linear thread within a sequence of identically sized aluminum panels.

Based in Devon, UK, Cook received his MA Painting at the Royal College of Art, London. He has exhibited throughout Europe and the US, including major solo shows at Camden Art Centre, London; Haugesund Kunstforening, Norway; Heidelberger Kunstverein, Germany; Museum de Beverd, Holland; Towner Gallery, Eastbourne, UK; Today Art Museum, Beijing; University of Memphis Museum of Art, TN; and Yokohama Museum of Art, Japan. His works are in prominent public collections, among them Allen Memorial Art Museum, OH; British Museum, London; Cleveland Museum of Art, OH; Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge UK; Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; Minneapolis Institute of Art, MN; Victoria and Albert Museum; and Yale Center for British Art, CT.

Upcoming exhibitions at the gallery include Katy Stone, opening November 21, 2013 and on view through January 4, 2014.

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