

SMALL A PROJECTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JESSE WILLENBRING
Landscapes & Interiors Meour
October 25 – December 20 2009

Small A Projects is pleased to present Jesse Willenbring in his first solo exhibition at the gallery, *Landscapes & Interiors Meour*. The exhibition opens Sunday, October 25th and runs through December 20th, 2009. A reception will be held for the artist from 6-8 pm on October 25th.

This exhibition centers around four large paintings – all oil on tablecloths mounted to panel. A pair of vertical works loosely describes an interior space. Determined yet elegant, the paintings build from a frenetic and flatly painted depiction of objects on a table in *After Hike (T.P.)*, to a transparent and glowing painting of what could be the same decomposing vignette in *Clara Bow*. In the two horizontal pictures the compositional structure is stretched and flattened to such a degree that the line of sight is displaced. In *Married*, flatly painted ovoid forms float calmly across a glossy, plaid surface; and in *The Ghost of Chilaquiles*, saturated and writhing pinks, greens and violets are violently piled atop a celadon toile. Competing and amplifying layers within each composition further a tension between illusionary space and the material object of the painting and its support.

Willenbring's theoretical approach to painting is blatantly inclusive. References, appropriation and intuition are exercised simultaneously as sources of pleasure and tools of invention. While viewing the work solicits historical reference, these allusions lend themselves to a game of formal ventriloquisms and ambitious re-thinkings. Instead of averting derivative citation, Willenbring advances a number of circuitous and playful associations: A Matisse-like form might collide with a Hartley-esque bump next to a Picasso-y shape in a complicated ground of layered pattern, texture and color that has its own internal logic.

As with many of his curatorial activities (including most recently the exhibition and potluck dinner series, *Don't Perish*, at Leo Koenig Projekte), the paintings articulate a space between the self-indulgence of the studio and the theatrical conditions of display. In this way, Willenbring instigates a generous dialogue about painting and furthers an ongoing concern in the work: a correlation between the abstract meeting of artist and observer and the awkward delights of a good dinner party.

The gallery will also present a solo project by Jesse Willenbring at the NADA art fair in Miami from December 3-6, 2009. At NADA, a selection of new paintings will be exhibited over patterns painted directly on the wall. These patterns – comprised of discrete, isolated elements from within the paintings or tablecloths – re-iterate the imminent reproducibility of any gesture, however expressive. Made up of squiggles, lemons, leaves, and other repeated forms, the patterns point to an ambiguity and confusion between painterly and graphic mark-making. This facility with the disparate languages of intuitive painting and the rote repetition (or even copy/paste tiling) of graphic design allows Willenbring to occupy a complex position that is neither a declaration of unique authorship nor its utter negation.

Jesse Willenbring lives and works in New York and has been included in group exhibitions including *The Living and the Dead* at Gavin Brown's Enterprise curated by Darren Bader; and *Me, You, You, A Ventriloquy*, Small A Projects, Portland and *Signs of Some Precarity*, Klaus von Nichtsaggend, Brooklyn, both curated by Carter Mull. He was the co-curator of *Don't Perish* at Leo Koenig Projekte, and *Rose Colored Glasses* at GBE @ Passerby.

The gallery is open from noon-six, Wednesday through Sunday and by appointment. Please contact the gallery for further information or images.