

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Benjamin Butler: Dark and Leafless

Lora Reynolds Gallery

November 22, 2008 – January 10, 2009

Opening Reception, Saturday, November 22, 6-8 pm; artist talk at 6:30 pm

Lora Reynolds Gallery is pleased to announce our second solo exhibition by New York-based painter Benjamin Butler.

The exhibition will feature new paintings that reflect the artist's continued interest in combining varying modes of 20th century abstraction with those of the decorative arts, folk art, and "Sunday" painting. Landscape painting, specifically the tree motif, provides the artist with a vehicle and a context for his investigation.

The works in *Dark and Leafless*, as the title suggests, reveal a shift from the vibrant palette of previous paintings, to a darker, more melancholic one. The directness of these paintings call to mind American landscape painters like Ralph Blakelock, Albert Pinkham Ryder, and Milton Avery, while the meditative repetition of palette and composition might also draw comparisons to Mark Rothko or Ad Reinhardt. Some of the works in the exhibition reveal a form of drip painting reminiscent of Jackson Pollock.

Repetition of titles, motif, structure, and palette further illustrate Butler's desire to combine elements of high and low art. The paintings, because of their aforementioned similarities, also invite comparison of their subtle differences, shifting the viewer's attention to the micro-level. Tree branches, defined by their negative space, draw the eye around the surface of the canvas, providing a dizzying optical experience.

Stylistically, the paintings incorporate elements of color field painting, psychedelic art, art nouveau, abstract expressionism, and pointillism. It is through a careful balance and synthesis of contrasting painterly effects that Butler attempts to transcend these genres, offering a unique meditation on contemporary painting.

Benjamin Butler was born in Westmoreland, Kansas in 1975. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. His work has been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions in the United States, Germany, Austria, Japan, Canada and Switzerland. His work is included in notable collections, including the Microsoft and UBS collections.

Benjamin Butler: Dark and Leafless will be on view at Lora Reynolds Gallery, 360 Nueces Street, Suite C, Austin, Texas through January 10, 2009. Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 11:00 am to 6:00 pm. For further information please contact Elizabeth Chiles at 512-215-4965 or info@lorareynolds.com.