

GEORGE ADAMS GALLERY

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Chris Ballantyne

Temporal: Recent Paintings and Watercolors

January 10 – March 3

To start off the new year, the George Adams Gallery will present our first exhibition of paintings and works on paper by New York artist Chris Ballantyne. The installation will include recent paintings on unprimed wood panels and ink and acrylic works on paper, as well as a site-specific work painted directly on the gallery wall.

Ballantyne combines the precision of architectural diagrams with the fluidity of ink paintings in his spare, unpopulated landscapes. Combining suburban or urban constructions such as apartment complexes, highways or parking lots with natural spaces, he plays off the contradictions inherent to man's relation to nature. Utilizing the lexicon of housing developments and urban sprawl, the repetition and featureless geometry stands in contrast to, or slyly mimics his expansive fields and forests, oceans and sky. The artificial compositions hint at absurdity: roads leading to nowhere punctuated by streetlights, endless city grids either self-contained or in infinite sprawl, backyard pools devoid of houses. In contrast, the natural spaces in Ballantyne's paintings are flat and empty, only the most token details describe their content: some blades of grass, an edge of surf, the suggestion of leaves. It is where the two collide that is most provocative. The 2016 painting 'Wave Cliff' is such an example, a crumbling ledge with ranch houses scattered along its edge has the shape and energy of a cresting wave. More often the juxtaposition is more distinct, with boundaries carefully delineating the transition between spaces.

Born in Mobile, AL in 1972, Chris Ballantyne currently lives and works in New York City and has been exhibiting his work in the United States and Europe for over two decades. He is the recipient of several awards, including a grant from the Joan Mitchell Foundation in 2005, and his work is included in multiple public collections.

Elmer Bischoff

Studies from Life

In the Side Gallery will be a selection of heretofore unseen figure studies by Elmer Bischoff, dating from 1952-1969. Executed in ink or graphite and taken from sketchbooks, they reveal an artist constantly at work and attentive to his surroundings. Subjects include cafe patrons, students studying or drawing, family and friends relaxing, beachgoers, as well as many studies of landscapes and seascapes.

Bischoff made the return to figurative painting in 1952, closely following David Park; his earliest paintings of the period are exploratory and often give the impression of previous abstract work. While most of these drawings are not direct studies for paintings, they do focus on many of the themes common to Bischoff's most accomplished figurative work, such as figures in spare interiors or repose. In many cases there are multiple studies of the same subject or space, as line and form is finessed.

This exhibition will coincide with our upcoming presentation of Bischoff's figurative paintings at the ADAA Art Show, February 28 - March 2.

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