

BETTY CUNINGHAM GALLERY

**PRESS RELEASE
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JAKE BERTHOT

Recent Paintings and Drawings

Dates: February 2 – March 4, 2006

Opening Reception: Thursday, February 2, 2006, 6 – 8 pm

Hours of Operation: Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm



Jake Berthot

November (For That Which Was Not), 2005

Oil on linen over panel

20 5/8 x 21 3/4 in.

52.39 x 55.25 cm.

On Thursday, February 2, 2006, Betty Cuninghams Gallery will open an exhibition of the recent paintings and drawings of Jake Berthot. Composed of approximately ten paintings and six drawings, the current exhibition draws from Berthot's work over the past three years.

The current exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with an essay by art critic and painter, Michael Brennan. In his introduction, Brennan refers to Berthot's paintings as "A Breathing Solitude." The "Breathing Solitude" is in fact what Berthot has been focusing on throughout his painting career, from his early notched abstract works to these new works with landscape reference. The new work pays homage to artists whom Berthot admires, such as Inness, Blakelock and Ryder. However when asked, Berthot speaks about the gaze of Rothko, the hovering quiet light of the artist's vision and the landscape's spirit. Berthot has said that he is trying to "paint silence before it completely disappears." Quiet, dark, seemingly impenetrable darkness, the works in this exhibition capture the physical expression of Berthot's meditative silence.

Berthot has been exhibiting regularly in New York since the early 1970's. Among several group exhibitions, Berthot was included the Whitney Museum of American Art's Annual in 1969 and again in 1973; The Corcoran Biennial in 1975; the Venice Biennale, 1976; *New Painting – New York* at the Hayward Gallery in London in 1979; *American Art: 1950 to the Present* at the Whitney Museum of

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American Art in 1979; *New Works on Paper* in 1981 at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; *An International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture*, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1984; *New York/Beijing*, Beijing Art Institute, Beijing, China in 1987; *Slow Art: Painting in New York Now*, P.S.1, Long Island City, New York in 1992; and *Square Painting/Plane Painting* at the Center on Contemporary Art, Seattle, Washington, 1997.

Additionally, Berthot received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1981, a National Endowment for the Arts Grant in 1983. In 1992 he received the Academy Award in Art from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Berthot's work is in several notable museum collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Whitney Museum of American Art, and The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, all in New York City. Nationally, his work is found in the collections of The National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX, The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC, the Museum of Art, University of California, Berkeley, CA, and several others.

The current exhibition will remain on view through March 4, 2006. *For further information, catalogue and/or photographs, please contact the gallery at 212-242-2772 or info@bettycunninghamgallery.com*

Next exhibition: FAIRFIELD PORTER, Paintings, Wednesday, March 8 – Saturday, April 15, 2006 [in cooperation with Hirschl & Adler Modern, representatives of the estate of Fairfield Porter, and with the Parrish Museum of Art, Southampton, NY]