

BETTY CUNINGHAM GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE
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William Bailey

Friday, April 8th – Saturday, May 7th
Opening reception: Friday, April 8th, 6-8 P.M.

On Friday, April 8, Betty Cunningham Gallery will open a major exhibition of the paintings and works on paper of William Bailey. Bailey, who has shown in New York since the late 1960's, is particularly distinguished by his quiet still-life paintings and singular figure paintings.

Five large canvases will figure prominently among the Bailey works presented, in which he continues to work with his distinctive color palette and characteristically familiar objects. Bailey does not use photographs or direct observation in his compositions. The objects represented are drawn from the interior, continually shaped and reshaped by the artist's imagination.

In an interview in 2003, Bailey said about his work, "I wanted to place a figure in a context outside of time, that is, in a more abstract context." This statement may help to explain why William Bailey does not view himself as a "realist." The abstract context that Bailey strives to achieve works in part through an erasure of narrative, the imagined characters of his compositions standing aloof from the physical wear imposed by connotations of time or place.

The same basic principles apply to Bailey's figure paintings, although complicated by the addition of human form. In Bailey's words:

...you can't escape the fact that you are dealing with another human being...So that even if you talk about monumentality and volumes fitting together and certain formal aspects of figurative painting, you can't escape the fact that before you there is a woman who's standing, sitting, smiling, frowning, etc.

William Bailey is Professor of Art Emeritus at Yale University and counts among his many accolades election to the National Academy of Design, membership of The American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, and serving as a trustee for the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation from 1970 to the present. Bailey has an extensive exhibition history, and his works appear in numerous public and private collections including the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Museum of Modern Art, NY; National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC; among many others.

For further information including biography, bibliography, and/or image requests, please contact the gallery at 212.242.2772 or info@bettycunninghamgallery.com

Next Exhibition: *Annette Lawrence*, May 12th through June 11th, 2005.

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