

Thomas Erben Gallery



Los Angeles Bound

Diedrick Brackens - Thomas Lawson - Tiffany Livingston - Mark Roeder

January 12 - February 18

Opening reception: Thursday, January 12, from 6 - 8:30 pm

Thomas Erben Gallery is pleased to present *Los Angeles Bound*, an exhibition of works by Diedrick Brackens, Thomas Lawson, Tiffany Livingston, and Mark Roeder. The show brings together four Los Angeles-based artists whose work reflects the unique spatial and cultural position of Los Angeles. The works included reflect the specific conditions of the city – its atmospheric scale and light, the physicality of its construction, and the speed at which any mental projection can take form – rather than the city's cliched representation as hyperreality.

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The compositions of **Thomas Lawson's** paintings stem from digitally reconfigured photographs. Photography and painting are treated as interrelated processes, and this artificially joint production is emphasized in the palette of the resulting images. In their poignant use of acidic colors, the works depict a veneer in which roughly textured figures merge into one another. In *Stop: DoNotGoOn*, three figures stand amidst desert plants: one looks ahead signaling to stop, while another crouches behind a plant's blossom. The range of iconography evokes the cultural intermingling of Southern California, with references from Classical Greek sculpture to a Mexican wrestler's mask, while suggesting visual styles from academic painting to advertising and design.



Tiffany Livingston's large-scale paintings recall the impressive scale of Los Angeles itself. With their broad, painterly fields of rich color, the works evoke both the spaciousness of landscapes but also of the inner realm of the mind. In her eight by twelve foot painting *For the Limelight*, Livingston revels in a painterly world, a contained sphere in which her strokes build into a muscular, finessed materiality. Drawing influence from the artifice of stage lighting – which tries to heighten a natural condition – Livingston uses hazy, shifting colors that suggest the natural gradations of Los Angeles' sky. The works also suggest the nuance of a complex inner world, as Livingston imbues the expansive canvas with heightened sensuality that is lush and open.

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In **Diedrick Brackens'** woven tapestries, the artist stitches together narrow strips of fabric that he has produced on a loom. In these pieces, the limp surface comprises a variety of textures and shifting colors, an effect that is produced through partially dyeing threads of different materials. The work *lost summer here, sweet sweet control* includes additional impure components, such as a small plastic hand and a zippered opening. This bodily resonance is made political in other works, where text posits ambiguously ironic statements, such as "Everything is lovely now."



Mark Roeder's paintings compile broad categories of images, each image articulated minimally in grayscale. Executed in acrylic and graphite on unstretched polyflex, the works suggest more the aesthetics of drawing than of painting. With their insistent focus on line, Roeder's images function partly as symbols, pointing towards their origins as well as towards their use. The selected works of the *Antipainting* series reference variously nature, the landscape, and California itself. *Antipainting (Argonauts -- Hygh Seas Vesseles Bound for Calyfornya, #1)* depicts a scene cluttered with small boats. These ships are populated with caricature-like depictions: in one, a figure with a pipe flies a sign that reads "GOLD INVESTMENT." In others, rowing figures are paired with those holding shovels. All are headed towards the riches of California.

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Diedrick Brackens (b. 1989, Mexia, Texas) earned his Masters of Fine Arts from California College of the Arts where he was the recipient of the Barclay Simpson Award. Solo shows include **Steve Turner**, Los Angeles (2016), **Johansson Projects**, Oakland (2015) and two exhibitions at the **University of North Texas** (both in 2011). Numerous venues such as the **Berkeley Art Museum**; the **3rd Ghetto Biennale**, Port-au-Prince, Haiti; or the Work Gallery, **University of Michigan**, to name a few, have included his work. He is an Assistant Professor of Art at the California State University, Long Beach.

The work of Thomas Lawson (b. 1951, Glasgow) has been featured in countless exhibitions over the last four decades. Surveys devoted to his work have been held at the **San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art** at La Jolla and the **CCA**, Glasgow. Other solo exhibitions include **David Kordansky** (2012, 2009); **LAXART** (2007); **Rosamund Felsen** (1998); **Kuhlenschmidt** (1988, 1983), all Los Angeles; as well as **Participant** (2009); **Metro Pictures** (1989, 1987, 1985, 1984, 1982 1981) and **Artists Space** (1977), all in New York; and internationally **Anthony Reynolds**, London, as well as **Sylvie Ferre**, Lyon. Lawson was featured in *The Pictures Generation: 1974-1984*, a major 2009 survey exhibition at the **Metropolitan Museum of Art**, and *Made in L.A. 2012*, **Hammer Museum**, the first Los Angeles biennial. In addition to this rich exhibition history, Lawson has authored or edited many essays, anthologies and periodicals, including, with Susan Morgan, the seminal **REALLIFE** Magazine. *Mining for Gold*, an anthology of Lawson's writing, was published by **JRPIRingier** in 2005. Lawson is the Dean of the School of Art at the California Institute for the Arts, and editor-in-chief of **East of Borneo**.

Tiffany Livingston (b. 1988, Los Angeles) received her MFA at the Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia. Her work has been exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Los Angeles, Chicago and Philadelphia, including **Launch**, **Secret Recipe**, and **Tiger Strikes Asteroid**, all Los Angeles, as well as **Hooloon** and **Fjord**, Philadelphia.

Mark Roeder (b. 1974, Whittier, CA) received his BFA from Otis College of Art and Design in 2000. Besides participating in numerous group shows, solo exhibitions include **Michael Benevento** (2014); **The Finley** (2011) and **Sister** (2009), all Los Angeles, as well as **Atlanta Contemporary Art Center**. His work has been widely and critically discussed and his most recent solo show was named *Best of 2014* in **Artforum**, reviewed in the **Los Angeles Times** as well as **Mousse**, and listed in **LA Weekly's 5 Artsy Thing To Do This Week**. Roeder lives and works in Los Angeles.