

The painting depicts a dimly lit, cluttered interior space. On the left, a doorway or window looks out onto a bright, green outdoor scene. The central focus is a window with a white frame, through which a view of a green landscape is visible. The room is filled with various objects, including a dark wooden chair in the foreground, a table with a blue and white patterned cloth, and a red and white patterned rug on the floor. The overall style is expressive and textured, with visible brushstrokes and a rich, dark color palette.

BEN FENSKE
Recent Paintings



Self Portrait. 24 x 20 inches, oil 2008

Ben Fenske's latest works confirm our earlier convictions that he is one of the most important young painters in this generation's "Slow Art" movement. This movement is marked by a return to refined traditional painting techniques, while attempting to paint the truth and the beauty experienced in our contemporary life. Here we exhibit a new series of powerful interiors, which add a new layer to his already strong body of work. Fenske's trademark brush strokes, which are bold, unfussy, and accurate in tone and color, show even more confidence this year.

These paintings mark a turn toward more psychological subjects, adding a somewhat more serious tone to his oeuvre. Notable amongst these strong interiors is "The Break Up". This nearly 3 x 4 foot painting has its sorrowful subject, with her head buried in her crossed arms, slumped over a table which is ironically draped in the Florentine color of rebirth, lavender. The extra chair at the table raises a question; could the chair be for the recently departed mate, or perhaps she is waiting for another to console her? The gloom is countered by the joyous play of color and light warming the scene.

"My Room", is another intimate view of a private space, however, this one evokes sanctity and solace, with an archetypal Vermeer

composition of light flooding in from a un-shuttered window in the upper left corner. "Cary's World" catches the moment a single female figure enters a room glowing with the light streaming in from the window on the far wall. This work recalls some of the great impressionist works of the 19th century, while accurately depicting a contemporary expatriate's life in an apartment in Florence. The reflected sunlight on the floors reminds me of the Gustav Caillebotte (1851-1894) "The Floor Scrapers", while the perfectly placed dashes and dabs of color recall the interiors of Pierre Bonnard (age – age?).

Ben Fenske (b. 1978), a native of Minnesota, has been splitting his time between Sag Harbor, New York and Florence, Italy over the last three years. Although we mentioned two French impressionists, Fenske is far more influenced by the 19th century Russian painters Isaak Il'ich Levitan (1860 – 1900) and Ilya Repin (1844 – 1930), as well as lesser known mid-20th century Russian painters. This grand yet naturalist landscape tradition is especially clear in one of his most refined landscape paintings to date, "The Road" which is also the largest painting in the show at 40 x almost 60 inches. Before briefly studying at the Bougie Studio in Minneapolis and then the Florence Academy of Art in Italy, Fenske started painting at 19, with Joseph Paquet in St. Paul.

BEN FENSKE

Recent paintings

27 June to 26 July, 2009

GRENNING GALLERY



90 Main Street
Sag Harbor, NY 11963
631 725 8469
info@grenninggallery.com



My Room
40 x 31.5 inches, oil on linen, 2009



Road
40 x 59 inches, oil on linen, 2008



Secret Beach
31.5 x 47 inches, oil on linen, 2009



Cary's World
31.5 x 40 inches, oil on linen, 2009



Moonrise, Gibson
24 x 35.5 inches, oil on linen, 2009



The Breakup
35.5 x 43 inches, oil on linen, 2009



Sunny Day
27.5 x 35.5 inches, oil on linen, 2009



Nude
18 x 29.5 inches, oil on linen, 2009



Red
24 x 20 inches, oil on linen, 2009



Cary in the Kitchen
29.5 x 24 inches, oil on linen, 2009



July Sketch
20 x 24 inches, oil on linen, 2009



Break up Sketch
31.5 x 24 inches, oil on linen, 2008



Coffee
12 x 8 inches, oil on linen, 2009



Cloud Shadow
12 x 20 inches, oil on linen, 2009

September Day
22 x 35.5 inches, oil on linen, 2009





Table and Chairs
14 x 18 inches, oil on panel, 2009



Nude Sketch
8 x 12 inches, oil on panel, 2009



Clouds
12 x 16 inches, oil on panel, 2009



Tim Guitar
8 x 12 inches, oil on linen, 2009



GRENNING GALLERY



90 Main Street
Sag Harbor, NY 11963
631 725 8469
info@grenninggallery.com