

BETTY CUNINGHAM GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Abby Leigh *The Sleeper's Eye*

Dates: October 15 – November 14, 2009
Opening reception: Thursday, October 15, 6 – 8pm

New York, NY—September 19, 2009—Betty Cunningham Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of a new body of work by Abby Leigh, titled *The Sleeper's Eye**. The show will be on view from October 15 through November 14, 2009 at the gallery's space located at 541 W. 25th Street, between 10th and 11th Avenues. The artist will be present for an opening reception on October 15th, from 6 – 8 PM.



Abby Leigh
WAKING, 2009
Dry pigment, oil, and wax on canvas
50 x 50 inches

On view in this exhibition are twelve paintings and sixteen works on paper. The paintings, approximately 50 x 50 inches, have emerging central forms. Their surface colors reverberate and the equilibrium shifts forward and backward. According to Leigh, the paintings call to mind Cezanne's description of what the experience of looking at a painting should be:

“Shut your eyes, wait, think of nothing. Now, open them...one sees nothing but a great colored undulation. What then? An irradiation and glory of color. This is what a picture should give us...an abyss in which the eye is lost, a secret germination, a colored state of grace. Lose consciousness.”



Abby Leigh
TARGET, 2009
Smoke on paper
18 x 18 inches

Leigh's drawings are made solely of smoke. The smoke is skillfully channeled into formats of targets and stripes. Like the paintings, the targets' closely modulated tonalities shift in space: that which appears to be forward recedes when viewed as a whole. The stripe drawings, processional in their composition, are no less active. The density of the smoke, from almost transparent to charcoal black, is as animated as a bar code. These drawings with their clean edges and unsentimental form exhibit no traces of romanticism.

This recent body of work is a stylistic departure from past work, but Leigh says, "My preoccupations as a painter remain consistent, although my style may change. My work is always involved with transparency, both physical and metaphorical. I try to decode what I see around myself and translate the world into two dimensions."

Leigh lives and works in New York. She has been exhibiting her work since the early 1980s in both the US and Europe, including two previous shows at Betty Cuninghame Gallery. Her work can be seen in several public collections, including The Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; and Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT.

The exhibition will remain on view through Saturday, November 14, 2009. For further information and/or images, please contact the gallery at 212.242.2772 or info@bettycuninghamegallery.com

*Taken from a quote by Dylan Thomas: *...the sleeper's eye, Shifting to the light.*

Next exhibition: PEARLSTEIN/HELD, *Five Decades*, November 19, 2009 – February 13, 2010