

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE NEW ROMANTICS

Philippe Perrot
Blake Rayne
Lesley Vance
Christian Ward
Nick Mauss

January 10 – February 14, 2004

The Greene Naftali Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of *The New Romantics* on Friday, January 9th presenting new work by five young artists. Void of both cynicism and of naivety, the works of these painters are linked by an effort to create an active imaginary space where concerns spanning personal, psychological, social and intellectual play out. When viewed together the rich color and painterly handling these artists employ serve to construct a proposal about the possibilities of painting's expressive potential.

Philippe Perrot, who lives and works in Paris, uses thickly applied paint to give flesh to people and objects in ambiguous relationships in his three small canvases. The candy-colored palate animates both the living and the otherwise, creating a dense tableau of near-grotesque figures and signifying some delicate, and not so delicate, psychological tensions. Perrot's work has been the subject of solo shows at European galleries including Art: Concept, Paris, and in New York he has been shown at The Wrong Gallery and John Connelly Presents.

Blake Rayne continues thinking about the historical terms of the activity of painting through his simultaneously poetic and iconoclastic gestures. The crosshatch of his graffiti-ed James Fennimore Cooper monuments can be contextualized in two different ways, one looking back to painting traditions and paradigms, and another which desecrates the first, looking forward to contemporary notions of digitized space. Rayne graduated from Cal Arts in 1993, and shows at Greene Naftali. This year he will exhibit in a group show at Artists' Space.

Lesley Vance, a very recent Cal Arts MFA graduate, contributes the largest work in the show, a landscape stretching twelve feet across. The thin, deft painterly touch creates a retreat from reality rather than an elaboration on it. Her imagined landscapes, or biomorphic projections, invite navigation both visually and mentally. Similarly, Christian Ward creates otherworldly spaces, but in much more psychedelic canvases. His colors pull the viewer into the depths of caverns and create complexly layered, enigmatically monolithic structures, while at the same time courting kitsch by employing Bob Ross techniques. This will be Ward's first show in New York, living and working in London. Nick Mauss, who recently received his BFA from Cooper Union, offers small but potently colored works on paper. His drawings on his own moiré-patterned, handmade paper court youth culture, rock and roll, sixties psychedelia, and the poetic subject. He also offers paper cut out sculptures, one of a delicate vine crown and a second oversize black peacock feather. His work was recently on view at Daniel Reich Gallery.