

Bo Bartlett Paintings of Home

October 14– November 13, 2010

Opening Reception: Thursday, October 14, 6-8pm



"Your house is the last before the infinite, whoever you are." Rainer Maria Rilke

P·P·O·W is pleased to present Bo Bartlett's tenth solo exhibition, *Paintings of Home*. This exhibition depicts scenes from Bartlett's childhood home in Columbus, Georgia which he recently turned into a studio and seasonal home. This series of highly personal paintings that Bartlett has been working on for the past few years explores the concept of the archetypal 'home', which in psychological terms is symbolic of the 'self'.

Bringing together his knowledge of art history, religion, psychology and current events, Bartlett creates paintings that are simultaneously personal and universal. "This is the place of my dreams," says Bartlett. "It is not about nostalgia, or being regressive; the paintings are an act of 'summation', a 'culmination'. Home is not a specific place, a house or a yard, but a town, region and state of mind. The mood in Bartlett's paintings has often been associated with southern literature. The dramas, tragedies, passions suppressed and cultural tensions echo Faulkner, Williams and McCullers, and as a painter in the American Realist tradition continues the legacies of Eakins, Homer and Wyeth.

Within each painting there is the presence of history, both encapsulated and re-imagined. There are portraits of notable residents of the artist's hometown as well as objects from the artist's past. There is the bible he received the day he was born, a bar of soap in the corner of the bathtub which is one of his first memories, and a nurse's cap found upstairs in his attic. Another work, *Inheritance*, depicts a final dual portrait of Bartlett's aging parents; the space between them is as telling as their features or objects in the spare room.

The largest painting in the exhibition, entitled *Home*, shows Bartlett's life condensed in time through a scene played out in his childhood home's back yard. The painting reveals his bedroom windows, his parents' bedroom and bathroom windows, and the attic window. Each room contains their own dark mysteries. Outside, Bartlett crawls on all fours as if playing a yard game, while his wife stands front and center confronting the viewer with an examining gaze. A child half awake lies on a blanket in the grass. Bartlett, literally working in his own backyard, takes the personal microcosm of his life and transforms it into the universal macrocosm.

As Donald Kuspit states: "Bartlett renders his traumatic objects with exquisite awareness of their tangibility, which give them a peculiar perfection...(he) lets us see through his beautiful illusions to the emotional reality the illusion is meant to deny. He gives us the illusion and debunks it in the same narrative act – a truly dialectical achievement."

Bo Bartlett lives on Vashon Island, WA and Matinicus Island, ME. He has had numerous one person exhibitions and has had retrospectives at the Columbus Museum in Georgia, 2003 which traveled to the Greenville County Museum of Art, SC, the Frye Art Museum in Seattle, WA, the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, CA and Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, PA. In the summer of 2007 he had a one-person traveling exhibition that began at the Farnsworth Art Museum, ME. Bartlett graduated from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, PA and also has a certificate in film from New York University.

Upcoming: P·P·O·W is participating in SEVEN in Miami, November 30-December 5, 2010 <http://www.seven-miami.com/>