



sarah bowen gallery
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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Rick Briggs *Painter Man*
October 28, 2005 — November 27, 2005
Reception: Friday, October 28, 2005
7 – 9 P.M.

“Art is a luxury, for which the artist pays and pays.” – David Smith

Sarah Bowen Gallery is delighted to present the debut solo show of **Rick Briggs**, titled “Painter Man”. Briggs, who has quietly been flying beneath the radar in Williamsburg since 1981 serves up a batch of representational paintings based on a simple illustration after many years as an abstract painter. Briggs’ painting “about painting” is not quite what Clement Greenburg envisioned when he made his injunction all those years ago. Instead Briggs focuses his attention on the dilemma of an artist ensnared by his day job - house painting. Drawing on a variety of sources such as horror films like “The Shining” in a painting like “Red Room, Red Room”, or from art history in “Red Studio”, Briggs’s satirical dark humor colors what he calls a fictional autobiography.

When I started this series I had no idea where it would take me, I only knew that I’d had a shock of recognition of seeing something of myself when I made that first painting. Eventually the Painter Man series would become a platform for telling a story about the dual lives as a painter, the struggle between my day job and my art, and how I was being shaped by that struggle.

In such works as “The Profession of Faith” and “Offering”, Briggs draws upon his religious roots, wryly conflating the sacred and the mundane. Simultaneously humorous and affecting, this tale about a search for artistic redemption is marked by humanism and could easily be the story of thousands of similarly position artists. And yet it remains quite unique.

Briggs employs the tools of the trade in his work: his used drop covers, alkyd house paint, tape, plaster and plaster weld – a substance that adheres plaster to drywall. For Briggs, choosing to work with these materials is, in itself, redemptive in nature.

Painter Man will be accompanied by a catalogue with an essay written by Matt Freedman. As Freedman writes in the essay, “The gift bestowed on the artist who makes the decision to shake free of his own conventions and precedents is a body of work generated from lived experience that no other artist on the face of the earth could produce.” Amen to that!

sarah bowen gallery is open **Wednesday through Sunday, 11 am – 7 pm** and by appointment. The gallery is located at 210 North Sixth Street, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY, 11211. Directions: L Train to Bedford Avenue stop, take Driggs exit, walk one block south to Sixth Street, and then ½ block East. The gallery is located between Driggs and Roebling on the right hand side.