

JAMES HARRIS GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE



Studio Objects, 2009, oil on canvas, 48" x 48"

ERIC ELLIOTT *New Paintings*

September 3 – October 3, 2008

Opening Reception
Thursday September 3, 6 – 8 pm



James Harris Gallery is pleased to present our second solo exhibition of paintings by Eric Elliott. Elliott's paintings are defined by a reduced palette and a thick impasto that depict a traditional subject: the still life and the artist's studio. It is in the artist's hands that common everyday objects become an investigation not only of the viscous nature of paint but also light, atmosphere and composition; the formal constructs of painting's practice.

At first glance the overall tonal quality is grey, but subtle color is revealed through careful observation. In these works the objects are largely obscured by thick heavily worked painted surfaces. Elliott plays off the expressive handling of paint to concentrate on the autonomy of the each object and how they inform one another. His subject matter – plants, teapots, containers and whatever else happens to surround him in his studio – are all treated indiscriminately and are reduced to simple, basic props that allow Elliott's concerns to lie more importantly in the atmospheric geometry of shape. The repetition and systematic variation of these objects in loose groupings allows the artist to investigate the diffusion of light that results in obfuscation and the illusionary nature of perspective in painting. Choosing instead to allow the paint to build up on the surface until the fore, middle and background have been compressed and merge together. His brushwork and tonal variation often intrude or blur where one thing begins and another ends, leading each element to become part of a greater whole. Elliott's interest in the tradition of realist painting allows his practice to push beyond its conventions of representation and to hover between dissolution of form and the clarity of observation.

Eric Elliott won the 2009 Neddy Artist Fellowship in painting, a 2009 Arts Projects Award from 4 Culture, and was included in the 9th Northwest Biennial at the Tacoma Art Museum.