

# Alexander and Bonin

EXHIBITION: *Land and Sea*

DATES: May 22 – July 25, 2003

LOCATION: 132 Tenth Avenue between 18th and 19th

HOURS: Tuesday – Friday 10am to 6pm  
August: by appointment

This summer, Alexander and Bonin will exhibit land and seascapes by Matthew Benedict, Robert Bordo, Neil Jenney, Stefan Kürten, Ree Morton, Sylvia Plimack Mangold and Glen Rubsamen. *Land and Sea* presents seven painters whose varied approaches to the landscape range from plein air observation to an almost total artificiality.

Matthew Benedict's recent show at Alexander and Bonin explored ceremonies that take place at sea when ships cross the equator. He has repeatedly explored sea imagery in his portraits of pirates, sailors and saints. The landscape frequently figures in his paintings as a setting for narratives or as a decorative motif presented in the illusionistic manner of woodblock wallpaper.

Preexisting two-dimensional images such as maps and postcards often inspire Robert Bordo's paintings. In his recent work, the 'postcards' are painted as stacked planes of landscape, densely filling the canvases. In contrast to this 'stacking', the landscape imagery often travels over the surface of the planes creating a tension between the perceived layering and a continuous surface.

One of Neil Jenney's recent *North America Divided* paintings will be exhibited. This work is one of Jenney's "concerned" paintings, his central body of work since the early 1970s. In these works, Jenney displays a degree of finesse that is the antithesis of his so-called 'bad' (or "unconcerned") paintings of 1969. *North America Divided* depicts a slice of landscape with a portion of a tree trunk at its center.

Stillness and a disquieting claustrophobia mark Stefan Kürten's landscapes and interiors. Of ten based on elusive ideals of home and a happy future, they seductively suggest the reality of life's disappointments. A new painting of a suburban neighborhood appears to be invaded by a creeping vine-like pattern. Kürten will have his second solo show at Alexander and Bonin in October 2003.

*Regional Piece* (1976), a work from one of Ree Morton's most celebrated series, is a diptych portraying the above and below of a seascape. Framed by green curtains made of celastic, a signature material for the artist, one sees a glowing sunset above the water line and a large fish below. The separation of these two 'worlds' above and below the sea is emphasized by the shift in scale and distance from which they are depicted.

Sylvia Plimack Mangold has painted the landscape and its trees from observation since the late 1970s. For Plimack Mangold repeated motifs provide an arena for painting at its most formal and primal. Her current solo show at Alexander and Bonin (through May 17) focuses on two trees – the Maple and the Pin Oak. In *Land and Sea* she will show an earlier painting of her Washingtonville landscape painted from a further, more encompassing viewpoint.

Working in oil on canvas or panel, Glen Rubsamen subverts our expectations by painting eerily photographic palm trees, aside manmade 'improvements' such as telephone poles and stop lights, set against glowing skies. The works evoke travel posters for destinations both ominous and alluring. *Hopewell*, a solo show of Rubsamen paintings originally shown in the Taipei Biennial is on view at ESSO Gallery, NY through May 24.