

GALLERI URBANE

Benjamin Terry: *Inconsiderately Happy*

October 8, 2022 - November 12, 2022

Public Reception: October 8 from 6–8pm

Galleri Urbane is pleased to announce *Inconsiderately Happy*, an exhibition of artworks by Dallas-based artist Benjamin Terry. For his third solo exhibition with Galleri Urbane, Terry continues his painting practice in paint on plywood, taking on new challenges of gesture.

During a recent dinner with friends, the discussion arrived at a song: the lyrics of Dolly Parton's "The Grass is Blue." In it, couplets reveal a series of falsehoods, contradictions that demonstrate the narrator's denial at the loss of a loved one. One line in particular caught Terry's imagination: "Can one end their sorrow, just cross over it and into that realm of insensitive bliss?" Parton's inquisition in grief sparked further curiosity in Terry. "For this show, I thought it was worth spending time with the acknowledgement that some people's happiness can bring others misery."

It's a hardy concept, that many environments are zero-sum in terms of winners and losers. Terry's examples of this phenomenon include enduring overzealous laughter in a theater for a film that's not very good. Others might be akin to a loud roommate, enjoying an album while you're studying for an exam.

One might imagine that it's a bit of self torture to choose to work with cliches. A watchful guard of the painterly gesture, Terry has avoided the soft, neon of flat, toothless gradients. However, *Inconsiderately Happy* is an effort from the artist to continue to develop his choice of gesture. During the aforementioned dinner discussion, Terry remembered that there was a piece developing in the studio which featured a green blade, an abstraction of foliage. He gave himself permission to investigate the other side of painting, one he formerly wrote off as mere kitsch, to deliver something new.

"The synchronicity between this painting trope, how various audiences respond to it, and the idea of *Inconsiderately Happy* became intrinsically intertwined," writes Terry in an exhibition statement preparing for the show. The trope of the splatter has become so pedestrian, so fatuous that it inhabits a fermented visual space; one that is ripe for sowing new compositional approaches.

If you're following this inversion, then congratulations. It's about the place where the discerning and the masses conflict. Terry is working his way through the bitter ironies of painting in order to find a balance in his work. It's not so much about loving or hating any motif in art, but that there will always be something new to find in the old.

Benjamin Terry lives and works in Dallas, TX. He received an MFA in Drawing and Painting in 2013 from the University of North Texas. He has exhibited work in numerous solo and group exhibitions across the country including Atlanta, Baltimore, Brooklyn, San Francisco, Dallas, and Houston. Terry was an artist-in-resident at The Maple Terrace in Brooklyn in the spring of 2018 and 100 West Corsicana in 2020. Curatorial work has become an integral part of his practice with exhibitions curated at Kirk Hopper Fine Arts (Dallas), Circuit12 Contemporary (Dallas), and Texas Woman's University (Denton) in 2017. He was featured in volume 96 and 132 of *New American Paintings*, and has received both the Clare Hart Degoyler and the Arch and Anne Giles Kimbrough awards from the Dallas Museum of Art. He is currently a Senior Lecturer at the University of Texas Arlington.