

APRIL 5 THRU MAY 12, 2007

Mike Cockrill



Kent Gallery is pleased to present a provocative new group of paintings by Mike Cockrill, an artist exhibiting with Kent Gallery for the first time.

The 15 paintings, completed over the previous three years, explore the complex world of childhood and are inspired in part by American children's illustrated stories from the '50s and '60s.

In Cockrill's art, the cats, flowers, and storybook houses that enliven books illustrated by such figures as Gustaff Tenggren and Leonard Weisgard become "markers" that point to distant memories where real and imagined worlds flow together. In his paintings, stories of gathering pumpkins and imaginary voyages become charged metaphors, which are reworked and re-explored from a contemporary vantage. Cockrill's art closely details the rich transition from the world of childhood fantasy to adult awareness in a manner that is both playfully innocent and sexually charged.

Enduring issues in Cockrill's work have developed over several decades and have been carried through several bodies of distinct work. Following classical training at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, his early success and notoriety were established by the satirical cartoon book "The White Papers" (1982). A forerunner of the current interest in nostalgic figuration, Cockrill balances the sacred and profane as well as issues of sex, politics and the suburban family.

Gallery hours are Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 to 6.

For further information, please contact Douglas Walla 212 627 3680