

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 27 2015

Inman Gallery is pleased to present
the exhibitions:

**Tommy Fitzpatrick:
*Cat's Cradle***

And in the south gallery

**Chroma
Gilad Efrat, Carl Suddath,
Jim Verburg**

October 30, 2015 – January 2, 2016

Opening Reception:
Friday, October 30th
6 – 8 pm

Gallery hours:

Tues. – Sat., 11 – 6 and by appointment



Tommy Fitzpatrick, ***Cat's Eye***, 2015
acrylic on canvas over panel, 68 x 48 inches

Inman Gallery is pleased to present *Cat's Cradle*, an exhibition of new work by **Tommy Fitzpatrick** in the Main Gallery. This will be Fitzpatrick's ninth solo show with Inman since 1998. In the South Gallery, *Chroma*, a selection of works on paper by **Gilad Efrat, Carl Suddath** and **Jim Verburg** will be on view. Both shows will open Friday, October 30th, with a reception from 6 to 8, and will continue through January 2nd.

The string game cat's cradle is a mathematical exercise repurposed as a fun pastime, with good reason: there's mystery in its process, in the order discovered through increasingly complex manipulations. That sort of revelation is as available to schoolchildren playing with string as it is to chemists charting crystalline structures. We're tinkerers by nature, and once we perceive some underlying pattern we tend to fiddle with it until we crack it or it cracks us.

Tommy Fitzpatrick's most recent paintings are all named after classic string games and designs, and they share that sense of serious play. Working from photographs of loose-limbed wooden lattices, he translates volume, perspective and light into hard-edged pattern, pairing an almost geometric articulation of space with an insistence on painted surface. That contradistinction – between flat pattern and illusionistic depth – is the knot Fitzpatrick has been untangling and retying with increasing sophistication for decades. At first blush, *Jacob's Ladder* is a straightforward depiction of a red cage starkly lit against a yellow ground. But small idiosyncrasies undercut the precise rendering: variation in hue breaks the yellow field into discrete shapes; errant blocks seem immune to gravity and perspective; incongruous red outlines trace shadows like racing stripes. *Twin Diamonds* might read as a reflection or a symmetrical armature, but nothing lines up quite right. In fact, Fitzpatrick collages his source photographs into new compositions, further subverting any naturalistic sense of volume. And yet for all the disruptions, Fitzpatrick's handling of light and form is so clearly grounded in observation that the space of his paintings, pleated as it may be, remains tenaciously convincing.

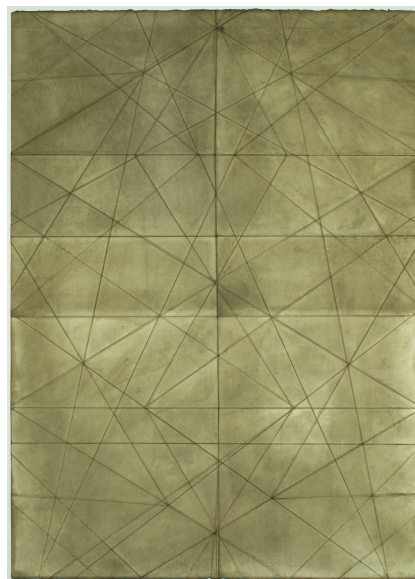
Illusionistic depth has been the preoccupation – pursued as an ideal or rejected as hokum – of a great many artists for at least half a millennium, but what’s comparatively rare is Fitzpatrick’s quixotic determination to have it both ways, to tell a bald lie so appealingly that it doesn’t even need to be credible. That brings us to another allusion in the exhibition’s title: the Kurt Vonnegut novel of the same name. *Cat’s Cradle*, the book, imagines the potentially disastrous consequences of reckless curiosity, and disputes the virtue of truth for its own sake. Against the pieties of science and progress Vonnegut proposes an admittedly absurd religion that recommends itself as the most brazen, and therefore the most honest, hypocrisy in a fraudulent world. It professes, as its narrator summarizes in the final pages, “the heartbreaking necessity of lying about reality, and the heartbreaking impossibility of lying about it.” That’s not a worldview with a solution. It’s a seesaw that needs a good sense of balance and a better sense of humor. Fitzpatrick’s paintings aren’t finally trying to convince us of anything, either; they’re content to present us with riddles whose pleasure is less in the answer and more in the telling.

Although the most obvious theme to the work in *Chroma* is the artists’ shared use of mindful process and almost monochromatic palettes, the more telling comparison might be the way in which all three overstep those boundaries. As attentive to their surfaces and materials as they clearly are, none of them shies away from farther-reaching connotations. **Gilad Efrat**’s diaphanous pastel fields, for instance, are in fact skin-color studies. **Jim Verburg**’s improvisatory transfer process, accumulating thin translucent layers of oil-based ink, takes on the depth and luminosity of photography. The rich blacks, smooth gradations and nebulae of white specks bring to mind the vacuum of the night sky or an empty scanner bed while staying firmly grounded in touch and technique. **Carl Suddath**’s folded, dyed and bleached sheets of paper are perhaps the closest to purely concrete objects, but subtle asymmetries and variations of tone breathe space and vitality between the creases.

The affinities between the works are the more striking because these artists don’t, under other circumstances, pursue similar ends. They each arrived at this mutually intelligible language from fairly disparate precincts, and part of the fun is in comparing dialects. Suddath’s work oftentimes implies a function or system, some point of reference that draws it away from uncomplicated abstraction. But his drawings and sculptures never settle into legible representation. Efrat’s paintings, on the other hand, have moved from methodical renderings of photographic source material towards progressively more exuberant mark-making. Jim Verburg expressly imparts emotional character to his treatment of light and transparency. In fact, what unites these artists, and what marks their meeting as noteworthy, isn’t so much that they all find themselves in the same place, but that they’re all just passing through.

Tommy Fitzpatrick (born 1969, Dallas, Texas) lives and works in Austin, Texas. Fitzpatrick earned his BA from The University of Texas at Austin in 1991 and an MFA from Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, in 1993. He has since exhibited his work in many solo exhibitions, including the recent shows *Electric Labyrinth*, Holly Johnson Gallery, Dallas, Texas (2014); *CITY FACES*, Michael Schultz Gallery, Seoul, Korea (2010); and *Geometry in Reflection: Tommy Fitzpatrick and Margo Sawyer*, The Gallery at the University of Texas at Arlington, Texas (2009). Fitzpatrick’s paintings are in the public collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, as well as the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas. He is an Assistant Professor of painting at Texas State University in San Marcos.

Gilad Efrat (born Beer Sheva, Israel, 1969) lives and works in Tel Aviv, Israel. Efrat has exhibited internationally, including an early career retrospective, *Ape Scape*, at the Museum of Art, Ein Harod, Israel (2010) and solo exhibitions at Oredaria Gallery of Contemporary Art, Rome, Italy (2008 and 2004) and Inman Gallery, Houston Texas (2012, 2008, 2004). **Carl Suddath** (born Jacksonville, Florida, 1976) lives and works in Houston, Texas. His work has been exhibited in many solo exhibitions, including shows at The Suburban, Oak Park, IL (2009); Lawndale Art Center, Houston, TX (2007); and Van Harrison Gallery, New York (2005), and has been reviewed in the Houston Chronicle and Artforum International, as well as on KUHF Houston Public Radio. **Jim Verburg** lives and works in Toronto, Canada. He has mounted the recent solo exhibitions *What is Missing/What is Seen* at VOLTA Art Fair (2015) and *Afterimage* at Galerie Nicolas Robert in Montreal (2014), and has forthcoming solo exhibitions at widmertheodoridis in Zurich, Switzerland (2016) and Rodman Hall Art Centre in St. Catherine, Ontario (2017).



Carl Suddath, *Untitled*, 2015
dye, folded paper, 30 x 22 inches

For more information please contact the gallery at 713-526-7800 or info@inmangallery.com.