

BEN BROWN

- *Press Release for immediate release* -

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Tony Bevan – *New Paintings*

Ben Brown Fine Arts is pleased to present an exhibition of new paintings by Tony Bevan one of Britain's leading figurative painters. The exhibition will feature a selection of his works from the various themes Bevan has investigated over the past three decades including, the human head, architectural interiors and more recently, landscapes that have been inspired by a trip to China. Bevan has been at the forefront of British visual arts for almost thirty years. His work is spectacularly daunting through the dramatic lines he creates of charcoal and paint. Simplicity and composition provide a unique perspective that portrays magnificence in Bevan's authorship, narrative and vision.

Bevan concentrates on specific subjects investigating the lengths to which subjectivity can be pushed to abstraction. The underlying existentialism of this work recalls the paintings of Francis Bacon and Edvard Munch, embodying states of anxiety and despair. Bevan strips his images to a bare minimum where the rawness and directness of his work can evoke a sense of alienation.

Bevan developed his portraiture throughout the 1980s and 90s, often working in series on individual subjects. His 'Heads' emphasize of the unique structuring of the human body. They are often presented as floating, not to dislocate, but to remind the viewer of the all encompassing nature of the mind.

The architectural themes portray melancholy and desolation to capture extreme psychological states. Bevan's interiors vary from vast corridors to furniture. The show includes some of Bevan's table-top subjects; images created from random assemblages of objects that he finds in his studio. They are composed of stark lines from mixed pigment and charcoal to produce energetic and emotive formations resembling a landscape or hillside village. He uses Architecture and interiors lead the viewer to 'the imaginative space of painting', from 3D to 2D and then hopefully to a fourth Dimension.

There is a direct relationship between the architectural drawings, landscapes and figurative heads. He presents all three in a skeletal form, highlighting the structures inherent, through the thick lines and marks of pure colour. His use of charcoal and acrylic paint gives his painting a remarkably opulent appearance. He presents a profound aesthetic in the markings through thickness, texture and an understanding of how the image was created by the artist. In making a direct connection between the work and the viewer, Bevan creates an imaginative space for the art and the viewer to exist in. He explains:

"For me the nature of painting is contemplative and the pictorial space is one for reverie, where dreams can take place."

In March 2007, Tony Bevan was elected as a Royal Academician of the Royal Academy of Arts in London. His work exists in many prominent international collections such as the Tate. Ben Brown Fine Arts is excited that such an admired artist with such stunning work will be the first to exhibit in its new space in 12 Brook's Mews.

Tony Bevan studied at the Bradford School of Art (1968–71) and then in London at Goldsmiths' College (1971–4) and the Slade School of Fine Art (1974–6). Since 1976, Bevan has exhibited widely, including his first solo U.S. show at L.A. Louver in 1989. The ICA, London, in 1987-88; Staatsgalerie Moderner Kunst Haus der Kunst, Munich, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London and the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 2003. A major retrospective was presented by the Institut Valencia d'Art Modern (IVAM) in Valencia, Spain in 2005.

Catalogue available with text by Michel Peppiatt and Sue Hubbard.

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