



Mathew Murphy
Exile and the Kingdom

Solo Exhibition:
30th March –
27th April 06

Private View:
29th March 2006

Canadian artist Matthew Murphy's degree show at the Slade last summer was widely praised by a variety of sources including ArtReview magazine which, in its annual exposé of top London MA graduates, commented upon the power of Murphy's paintings to transport the viewer into the midst of alternative worlds. The Wyer Gallery is delighted to announce *Exile and the Kingdom*, a solo exhibition of Murphy's work.

Murphy's Slade paintings were characterised by hallucinatory compositions that mixed skewed motifs from the Canadian landscape of his youth with suggestions of outlandish creatures and macabre events: comedic black narratives that took shape slowly against iridescent, highly oiled backgrounds. Now, in this exhibition of recent work that includes for the first time Murphy's works on paper, this gallows humour remains, perhaps even keener than ever. And, coupled with the artist's dark sense of mischief in narrative, these new paintings resonate with the artist's culturally perceived fears and loathings.

In *Exile and the Kingdom*, Murphy presents a series of paintings whose narrative is inspired by events witnessed one drink fuelled St. Patrick's Day night in London. In them,

Murphy cuts to the quick of a cultural repertoire of self-annihilation enacted in monotonous personal wastelands, as he depicts the morose and predictable route of revelry, from punch-ups and passing-out to the cab ride home and the cold coming of the morning after. In a grotesque nightmare of events, hallucinatory, distorted figures, including a monstrously phallus haired Medusa, emerge indistinctly from murky backgrounds charged with unexpected colour, thick impasto clumps of paint juxtaposed with matte stain and lyrical outcrops of glossy swirls and flourishes smeared and smudged in foreground relief.

Murphy's work is characterised at all times by a deft handling of colour and contrast as well as by his loose and unrestrained brushwork (a freedom of expression developed to further extreme in his watercolours), which in fact belies highly developed figurative arrangements on canvas. Their success reveals Murphy's extraordinary command of paint and above all, an intense enjoyment of his medium.

Matthew Murphy is based in London; he is a graduate of University of Toronto and McGill University and, most recently, the Slade School of Fine Art. Since graduating he has successfully participated in a number of exhibitions both here in London and New York. This is Matthew Murphy's first solo show.

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Notes to Editors

- 1 Images and further information are available at www.thewyergallery.co.uk
- 2 The Wyer Gallery is part of Deborah Bates Conservation and is located at 191 St John's Hill, Battersea, London, SW11 1TH.
- 3 Opening hours are Tuesday to Friday, 10am to 6pm; Thursday evenings until 8pm and Saturday 10am to 5pm, or other times by appointment.