

THE DRAWING ROOM 16R Newtown Lane, East Hampton, NY 11937 631.324.5016

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The Drawing Room in East Hampton is pleased to present *Richmond Burton: The Prism and the Kaleidoscope*, on view June 9 – July 11, 2005 with an opening reception June 11, 5 – 7 pm. Burton's first show of works on paper since 1999, is also his first solo show in the Hamptons where he lives and works in the home and studio built by Elaine de Kooning and subsequently owned by the sculptor John Chamberlain.

Burton created all of the twelve works on view, eleven watercolor and gouache paintings on paper and one oil painting on canvas, since his last New York gallery show at Cheim & Read in 2004. Like the paintings that formed the springboard for this body of work, Burton's new works on paper are characterized by distinctive, but complementary, geometric and biomorphic visual languages that reference precedents ranging from early modern masters such as Gustaf Klimt (1862–1918), and Marsden Hartley (1877-1943) to the Abstract Expressionists associated with Eastern Long Island.

In the works most apparently governed by geometric structure, such as *Pleace I*, *Nomad*, and *Shazam*, the horizontal grid structure is suggestive of landscape - "more like waves or water" - as much as it is about exquisitely conceived abstract pattern color and composition. These works, along with the oil painting, *Firewater* (2004), continue the exploration of a compositional motif that Burton developed in the mid-1990s. When he returned to further mine this motif in 2004, he introduced a trapezoidal, step-like element at the base of the composition. Usually rendered in a shimmering silver pigment, which is often extended through the gridded linear network, the tapered horizontal form acts as both an invitation to enter the space of the painting, and an assertive reminder of its illusory nature.

That Burton also enjoys reveling in the *freedom* of organic form, is evidenced by a few airy, fluid compositions that *almost* appear improvised. In fact, these works also begin with a light charcoal mapping of the composition, though his freshly painted arabesques belie the underlying discipline. Burton's private trove of sketchbooks – source material that he returns to periodically for new inspiration – attests to the fact that drawing is central to his practice.

Burton was born in Talladega, Alabama in 1960. After studying architecture at Rice University, he spent his first years in New York working for IM Pei and Associates. While working for Pei, he began to pursue painting, and in 1987 had his first solo painting in New York. Burton is represented by Cheim & Read gallery in Chelsea where he has been the subject of four solo shows since joining that gallery's stable in 1997. His work is included in numerous museum collections, among them The Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Art Institute of Chicago, and The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

For further information or reproductions, please contact Susan Papa at 631.324.5016 or info@drawingroom-gallery.com.