

VALERIE CARBERRY GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JIM LUTES
PONIES AND PSYCHOS
March 6 - 29, 2014

CARBERRY @ WRIGHT
980 MADISON AVE.
NEW YORK, NY 10075



Ghost Mare in the Cold, 2013, egg tempera on panel, 41 x 35 inches

Valerie Carberry Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of *Ponies and Psychos*, an exhibition of recent paintings by Jim Lutes (b. 1955). *Ponies and Psychos* is the first solo exhibition of Lutes's influential work in New York in over twenty years and is produced in collaboration with Wright gallery at 980 Madison Avenue.

Ensnarled in Lutes's semi-abstractions is a cast of unlikely witnesses to the violent histories of the Pacific Northwest. Having grown up in Washington, Lutes has extensively researched the people and traveled the places that he paints. Citizens, horses, landscapes, and the artist himself are depicted as though risen from an untold and painful American narrative, one that is stained by the ongoing betrayal of Native American populations in the nineteenth century. The prismatic sightlines in these paintings darken the American mythos of the West while debating the essential tenets of painting. Each work is openly structured as an exploration of pure gestural finesse and an interrogation of the world of signs and images. With these questions, Lutes appears to demand an accounting of the overlapping personal and social histories that he depicts; yet these very inquiries forestall the possibility of ever reaching a single perspective.

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Over the last three decades, Jim Lutes has mastered a brazen coupling of gorgeous, unsettling brushwork with scenes of probing introspection. His brushstrokes at times appear to posit themselves simply as images of brushstrokes. They roam and ribbon and quote themselves knowingly as the vocabulary of an abstract painter. But in other moments, these same marks snap to an illusionistic agenda, describing faces, figures, websites, and maps, like evidence from a case file on an indistinct and ongoing crime.

A complex and fascinating text by the artist accompanies the paintings in an illustrated exhibition catalogue. In this essay of sorts, an unedited transcript of a dictation made using the iPhone Dragon app, Lutes sketches his relationship to the stories behind his current paintings. Nearing the end of the text, he remarks that his subject, be it painting or selfhood or history, is "an archetype and a lie at the same time." The essential self-recrimination of these works locates them in a key discourse in contemporary painting, one that surveys not only the individual artist's self-doubt, but also the doubts surrounding a rigid and embattled way of understanding images and perhaps history itself.

Jim Lutes has participated in numerous national and international museum exhibitions, including Documenta IX and the 1987 and 2010 Whitney Biennials. Ponies and Psychos is his fourth solo exhibition with Valerie Carberry Gallery. He lives and works in Chicago.

INQUIRIES:

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