

For Immediate Release – November 2006

Greenberg Van Doren to present a solo exhibition of paintings

BENJAMIN EDWARDS: WE

November 17, 2006 – January 13, 2007

Greenberg Van Doren is pleased to present an exhibition of recent paintings by Washington D.C. based artist Benjamin Edwards, on view November 17 – January 13, 2007. *Benjamin Edwards: We* is the artist's third one-person exhibition with the gallery. He is currently part of the Public Image: Painting in the City exhibition in Tilburg, The Netherlands and will be included in the forthcoming exhibition City-M at the Kunsthau Graz, Austria. Edwards is the recipient of the first Athena / RISD / Target Emerging Artist Award.

The title and impetus for the show is the historic dystopian novel of the same name by the Russian revolutionary Yevgeny Zamyatin. Written in 1920, but not published until 1988, it takes the form of the diary of state mathematician named D-503, who, to his shock, experiences the most disruptive emotion imaginable: love for another human being. At once satirical and sobering *We* depicts a totalitarian and conformative state, with free will as the cause of a society's unhappiness. Its literary and imagistic innovations include futuristic visions of buildings, where everything is made of glass or transparent materials, so that everyone is constantly visible.

In his exhibition *We*, Edwards continues to hold a mirror to contemporary society, reflecting it back as hallucinatory and visionary landscapes. Since his last show, he has transitioned to using oil paints from acrylic, enriching the palette and texture of his work. While he continues to deploy a seemingly inexhaustible dictionary of corporate identities and image branding, the artist has also incorporated numerous images from disparate sources, both high and low, found and invented. These include historical designs and structures of city buildings and plans (including those never built and/or destroyed); hybrid figures or 'automatons'; and the atmospheric effects found in the 'celebrated' American Edens of Thomas Kincade and Thomas Cole. As in Zamyatin's novel, Edwards's new work is composed and layered with transparencies and shifts in figure and ground. The artist has stated his painting is a "vast expanse of all that is outside the crushing force of the present moment, antithesis of the mundane, forever relegated to a lost past or an unrealized future, but all in the mind, individual or cultural. It is a graveyard, a museum, an ideology, a memory (sweet or painful) a wish, a fear, a hope..."

Benjamin Edwards was born 1970 in Iowa City and lives and works in Washington, D.C. He studied UCLA; the San Francisco Art Institute; and Rhode Island School of Design. His work is in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art, NY; the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; and the New York Public Library, NY.

Greenberg Van Doren Gallery is located at 730 5th Avenue at 57th Street, NY, 10019. Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 10 AM to 6 PM. For more information, please contact the gallery at 212.445.0444.