

Tom Uttech | Recent Paintings

September 9 through October 21, 2006

Reception for the artist, Thursday September 14, 5:30 – 6:30 pm

The gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of Tom Uttech's recent paintings. The show will include fifteen paintings dating from 2005-2006. This will be his first exhibition since his 2004 retrospective at the Milwaukee Art Museum.

Uttech constructs a world imbued with notions of the sublime. His panoramic views use deep perspective with the minutest details coming into sharp focus, creating a dreamlike sense of the infinite. While the scenes of verdant northern forests are familiar, Uttech uses otherworldly elements to suggest this is not the forest you think you know. This play shifts the work back and forth between realism and a mythical interpretation.

A narrative is present, but ambiguous. Fauna, which is usually hidden, is visible. Sometimes in flight, other times in confrontational acknowledgment of the viewer - the zoomorphic elements evoke turbulence. The migration scenes are especially suggestive of imminent catastrophe. Also, there is no trace of the modern world, no power-lines, candy wrappers – no humans. It is an untouched ancient world from the past.

Lucy Lippard writes in her essay, *Magnetic North*, the catalog essay for the Milwaukee Art Museum's retrospective: "Metaphor has always been a way to confront the depths. Uttech does not paint 'scenery' so much as he offers metaphors for his exalted experience of nature. Nature confronted on her own turf is always potentially dangerous, and no amount of beauty can erase that undercurrent of anxiety and exhilaration we feel when we sleep alone outdoors or take risks in the wilds in the name of adventure or love of nature. Some lands seem inherently more menacing than others."