

DEREK ELLER GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tom Thayer
Superrational Searching
April 25 - May 24, 2014
Opening Reception:
Friday, April 25, 6-8pm

"As a teenager, I regularly led my friends on unusual, middle-of-the-night journeys through the suburban landscape. I was searching for something. I was searching for the superrational. Inspired by Jerzy Grotowski's paratheatrical exercises, I conducted activities on these journeys borrowing elements familiar to elementary-school children (playing, drawing, making music, putting on plays), but that had ominous overtones in their execution.

Getting the Sky to Pull You was one such activity. On very windy, dark nights, kites would be flown. Soon after they were airborne, they would disappear into the blackness. The player was left gripping a rigid string that shot straight up into outer space. The black sky heaved hard on the string. So the player would feed the sky more string. But the more string the player fed to the sky, the harder the blackness pulled at them. The string strained and jerked, as if the entire sky was one gigantic squid snagged on a hook. With this particular activity, there always seemed to be a universal, ecstatic look on the player's faces. I carried a pair of scissors with me. At the height of their tug-of-war with the sky, I would walk around and cut the strings. The sky would suddenly let go, and the string would be sucked up into the blackness. The player was left on earth, arm outstretched, face pointing upward, mouth agape, their eyes wide and watery, searching the blackness for its lost attention."



Tom Thayer, *Superrational Searching*, 2014, acrylic paint, ink, tempera, pigments, glue, graphite, crayon, wire, string, felt and cardboard on felt, 40 x 30 inches

Derek Eller Gallery is pleased to present *Superrational Searching*, Tom Thayer's second solo exhibition at the gallery. In this exhibition of new paintings and video, Thayer furthers his explorations in empirical art and expansion into abstraction. Using collaged felt, cardboard, string, and other treated materials, the paintings and video have a powerful, oracular energy. Rune-like shapes populate the exhibition and generate a foreboding atmosphere, inchoate and irresolvable, a drama of forms hovering on the precipice of dissolution. In this body of work, images disintegrate and metamorphose in an alchemical process of continual reinvention.

Tom Thayer (b. 1970) lives and works in New Jersey. His most recent live performance took place at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in December 2013. His work was recently included in *Paper* at Saatchi Gallery, London; *Organized**, curated by Robert Janitz, at Galerie Sobering, Paris; *Utopia/Dystopia: Construction and Destruction in Photography and Collage* at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston; *2012 Whitney Biennial* at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Derek Eller Gallery is located at 615 West 27th Street, between 11th and 12th Avenues. Hours are Tuesday - Saturday from 11am - 6pm. For further information or image, please contact the gallery at 212.206.6411 or visit www.derekeller.com