

DIAZ CONTEMPORARY

Jeff Tutt

Josh Thorpe

September: Recent paintings, prints, and drawings

19 February to 21 March

Opening Thursday 19 February, 6 to 8

September. It seems these luminous days will never end. The city, which was almost empty during August, is filling up again. It is being replenished. The restaurants are all reopening, the shops. People are coming back from the country, the sea, from trips on roads all jammed with cars. The station is very crowded. There are children, dogs, families with old pieces of luggage bound by straps. I make my way among them. It's like being in a tunnel. Finally I emerge onto the brilliance of the quai, beneath a roof of glass panels which seems to magnify the light.

- James Salter, *A Sport and a Pastime*

Diaz Contemporary is pleased to present *September*, a selection of recent paintings, prints and drawings by Toronto-based artists Jeff Tutt and Josh Thorpe.

The work of both Tutt and Thorpe finds common ground in colour, perception, and desire. Placed in conversation, both artists' work engage the interplay of light and shadow, as well as the tenuous and ever-forming relationship between image and imagination.

Tutt's paintings are in constant motion between shadow and silhouette. They are equally abstract and figurative, erotic and comedic, and they persist beyond the limits of the canvas to prod the mind's eye. They may be understood as a continual reinterpretation of the mythical first act of painting, performed, according to Pliny the Elder, by a young woman of Corinth who, lamenting the departure of her lover to war, traced, by candlelight, the line of his shadow on the wall.

Thorpe's recent work presents images of flora and fauna in a range of media, some funny, some serene. These works glow in odd colours that jump in bright primaries and vibrate in pale tints, flickering in and out of vision as the body shifts position. Conceived of as a kind of pop art for the backyard naturalist or as the residue of hypnagogic hallucinations, these works turn their attention away from human folly, to gaze at moonlit dreams.

Tutt and Thorpe met in Toronto during the summer of 2009, where they quickly forged a friendship over a mutual past in Vancouver and various shared affective and aesthetic preoccupations, which led to future collaborations including an exhibition of Tutt's work at Thorpe's studio in February 2014 and the publication of two of Thorpe's bookworks by Tutt's *beaucagearts press*. These collaborations and shared interests prompted their pairing at Diaz Contemporary.

Jeff Tutt holds an MFA from the University of Guelph, and currently teaches at OCAD University and has been included in exhibitions at UTAC, Mercer Union, Or Gallery, and Anna Leonowens Gallery.

Josh Thorpe holds an MVS from the University of Toronto, and has participated in numerous exhibitions, including Mercer Union, Plug-in, MoCCA, and Printed Matter.