

For Immediate Release:

Chris Vasell  
*Cutouts: Variations on 14 Yellow Teeth*  
7 November – 21 December 2012

Team Gallery is pleased to present a show of new paintings by Los Angeles-based artist Chris Vasell. The exhibition will run from 07 November through 21 December 2012. The gallery is located at 83 Grand Street, cross streets Wooster and Greene. Concurrently, our 47 Wooster Street space will house an installation by Vienna-based artists Muntean/Rosenblum.

*Variations on 14 Yellow Teeth* is a new body of work that showcases Chris Vasell's eccentric approach to abstraction. The title refers to fourteen blocks of brushy, canary yellow arranged as if inside a gaping mouth in an untitled 1988 painting by Albert Oehlen. Taking this pictorial structure as a starting point, Vasell has fashioned paintings that are made up of disparate elements collaged onto stained canvases.

For this exhibition, Vasell has affixed found bits of differently colored cloth, felt, foil, paper, and other commonplace materials to stained canvas. Without using the traditional paint-and-brush method, Vasell's paintings are arrangements of line, color, and composition onto a surface in which shapes and materials rest. In the past, the artist has described his process of collage as Japanese Rock Gardening cum Serial-Killer-Spending-Time-With-The-Body. In a fluid process of collection and free association, he allows one piece to generate the next in an unreserved and cornucopian fashion.

The canvases to which the pieces are affixed are stained with faint, psychedelic washes of pale pink, acid blue, and sea green acrylic. The atmospheric quality of the coloring offers a smudgy, irregular rhythm to which the collaged pieces are set — something like the Los Angeles sky, with diffuse, low-hanging smog. Each work seems to consider the task of integrating these antithetical sensibilities, toying with their contradictions and possibilities. The backgrounds recall the expressionistic mid-century "soak stain" technique — oil paint with the washy look of watercolor — while the surface orchestration recalls the prime color paper cut-outs of Matisse's late collages — the "painting with scissors" method.

Neon pinks and greens, bright yellows and ruby reds stand out among the collaged fabrics and scraps. Most of the recognizable elements in the new paintings are sartorial: the leg of a tube sock, the elastic waistband from a pair of briefs, the lining of a hotel slipper, the wide halo of a crew neck t-shirt. The materials have a corporeal feel, alongside the tangible sense that they have been worn or used and are being reverently recycled, like a sophisticated art historical gesture spun into the logic of the canvases.

This is Vasell's second solo exhibition at Team Gallery. The artist has had numerous shows in galleries in both the U.S. and abroad. His paintings have also been exhibited in museum group exhibitions including those at the Aspen Art Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. His work is included in the collections of the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles.

Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 6pm, and Sunday 12pm to 6pm. For further information and/or photographs, please call 212.279.9219.