

TIM VAN LAERE GALLERY

BEN SLEDESENS

Pulling Ropes and Ringing Bells

5 May - 18 June 2016

Tim Van Laere Gallery is pleased to present *Pulling Ropes and Ringing Bells*, the first solo exhibition of Ben Sledsens (1991; who lives and works in Antwerp), where he will show a collection of large-scale canvases along with installations of drawings, that transform everyday interiors and subjects from his daily life into novel encounters.

His practice divides, consciously if not skillfully, into traditional genres such as portraits, interiors and landscapes. Sledsens invites us to consider the thoughts of the people, places and events that populate his vivid scenarios, whether they exist in private or public realms, in personal or shared experiences. His tempting contexts seduce by intertwining multiple narratives in a single work, making the viewing that much more entranced and involved. Sledsens translates his personal subject matter into poetic or romantic images, with an open beginning and ending, meant for interpretation by the spectator. In his work *Unexpected Journey* one might see a metaphor for the process of painting, measuring the gaps between painting as an individual pursuit and a shared experience, while another viewing conjures an equally dynamic emotion or narrative. All his works hide subtle links to each other, which only amplifies the works' underlying ambiguous significance while he creates a bigger fictitious world together. Central to the work is his profound understanding of painterly tradition. His large format canvases exist in a long tradition of painting that reference Henri Matisse, Henri Rousseau, and Pieter Bruegel the Elder, yet his works are part of a bigger poetic universe that is all his own.

His paintings display the contrasting textures of the materials, such as matte acrylic, bright oil, spray paint. In tandem with his paintings, he has produced a body of companion works on paper, through which he resolves elements of each composition and then later mines for future works on canvas.

An accompanying, fully illustrated catalogue will be published during the exhibition.