

TIM VAN LAERE GALLERY

Ben Sledsens **Two Trees**

Tim Van Laere Gallery is pleased to present *Two Trees*, the second solo exhibition of Ben Sledsens (°1991 Antwerp, lives and works in Antwerp), where he presents large-scale canvases in which he transforms daily life, literary characters, animal portraits and elements of (art)history into his own private utopia. His works often hide subtle links to each other and compositions recur also between paintings and drawings, which only amplifies the works' underlying ambiguous significance while he creates a bigger fictitious world together.

Central to the work of Sledsens is his profound understanding of painterly tradition. His palette of strong, vivid colors, high technical qualities and naïve perspective 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. 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 conjunction with this exhibition, the first monograph of Ben Sledsens will also be published.