

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Bruce Cohen

Reception for the Artist
Saturday, September 9, 5:00-7:00 pm

On View
September 9 – November 4, 2017

Leslie Sacks Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new paintings by Los Angeles based artist, Bruce Cohen. Cohen's alluring interiors and exquisite still lifes continue to captivate in his new body of work. The exhibition will feature a dozen paintings, most on canvas and some on wood panel, ranging in scale from 16 x 16 inches up to 48 x 72 inches.

Bruce Cohen's singular aesthetic is immediately distinguishable in its refined realism. He has explored the genres of interior and still life paintings for decades, yet his output always feels new and fresh. Nodding to the old masters and his passion for art history, he successfully summons a contemporary feel by way of a polished, yet punchy palette with an almost surreal compression of the picture plane. He executes a mastery of subject matter to his advantage and constantly perfects his painting to stunning effects. Cohen's motivation and inspiration culminates in an unhurried and meticulous rendering. Similar to artists like Jasper Johns and Jim Dine, who use a lexicon of repeated images as a visual vocabulary, Cohen revisits themes and objects (flowers, vases, books, window sills) finding endless arrangements. Stylistically the work's central focus of everyday objects found in daily life connects them to the Dutch masters of the 17th century, from whom Cohen derives great influence and inspiration.

In this new work Cohen experimented by painting directly on wood panel yielding a noticeable change in surface texture. These works in particular are flat and rich in color, as evidenced in *Poppies on Tablecloth*, 2017. The evenness serves to heighten a sense of surreal reality. He rejects the conventional compositional practices of painting still lifes by consuming more than half of the panel



with table and tablecloth, relegating his perfectly rendered poppies to the upper third. It is a curious choice, but it's these conscious decisions, which make Cohen's paintings so enigmatic and stimulating.

Though Cohen's work is rooted in the principles of realism, his paintings are constructed from a combination of memories and observations. Cohen orchestrates his scenes in a methodical manner, combining variations of flowers and piecing together portions of rooms, windows and doorways from his home. The artist has explained that although these interiors do not necessarily exist exactly as he paints them, they do exist this way in his mind. Geometric networks of windows, doorways and flattened passageways have always been mainstays in Cohen's work as is evident in *Blue Interior with Tulips*, 2017. Though perhaps not immediately obvious, the compositional structure is reminiscent of Richard Diebenkorn's *Ocean Park* series of works. This again demonstrates Cohen's keen art historical sensibilities, which consciously and subconsciously continue to inform and enhance his oeuvre.

Bruce Cohen studied at the Universities of California, Berkeley, Los Angeles and Santa Barbara. Painting for over forty years, his work is held in numerous esteemed public and private collections; The Santa Barbara Museum of Art, San Diego Museum of Art, San Jose Museum of Art, Frederick R. Weisman Foundation, Palm Springs Desert Museum of Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, among others. Bruce Cohen lives and works in Santa Monica, California.

Leslie Sacks Gallery is located in the Bergamot Station Arts Center in Santa Monica 2525 Michigan Avenue, B6. Gallery hours are Tuesday-Friday 10-6, Saturday 11-6. The gallery is online at lesliesacks.com. Email gallery@lesliesacks.com or call 310 264 0640.

Hi resolution jpeg's available upon request.