

MEDIA RELEASE

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Media Contact: Charlie James

Charlie@cjamesgallery.com

213.687.0844

Charlie James Gallery is delighted to present the exhibition:

TUCKER NICHOLS – *FLOWERLAND*

MAY 20 – JULY 8, 2017

ARTIST'S RECEPTION SATURDAY, MAY 20TH 2017 FROM 6-9PM

Charlie James Gallery is delighted to present *FLOWERLAND*, a debut Los Angeles solo show with Bay Area-based artist **Tucker Nichols**.

With an uncanny eye for color and composition, Tucker Nichols has recently taken his paintings in a more complex direction. Made with discarded house paint on wooden panels, these new works are composed of layers of flat shapes that seem to float on separate planes. The more than twenty works in the show share a frenzied energy, but each one has an unconventional palette and composition. As Roberta Smith described in *The New York Times*, "The works' flattened space, dense tactile surfaces, random drips and sharp, solid colors are very much of the moment, as is their boisterous scale. They self-identify as new. Part of the modernity and joy of Mr. Nichols's paintings is the suggestion that all the elements in a composition are autonomous. The pictures are all temporary arrangements that will scatter as soon as you look away. That they seem eager to do so is part of their strength."

The works depict what has become a signature subject for Nichols: arranged flowers on display. As he sees it, vases full of blooms are a stand-in for everything we don't quite know how to say in this world. At the same time, flowers, like art, aren't very good at saying anything specific—the exact same bouquet can mean anything from *I'm sorry* to *Thank you* to *I can't believe you're gone*. That's valuable right now for Nichols, especially since the 2016 election. "Our future suddenly feels dark and dangerous," Nichols says, "but then I see this insistence on being optimistic that feels just as potent—as if the two are offsetting energies. America, and California in particular, has become a place where we will our own reality: beyond climate destruction, beyond international conflict. North Korea may have its missiles trained on downtown Los Angeles, but out in Santa Monica we are still going to play beach volleyball."

FLOWERLAND is both a tribute to and a rebuke of the insistent smile we maintain in the face of chaos and destruction. "These are the angriest, most colorful protest paintings I've ever made," says Nichols. "I don't think art is great for specific messages. I'm just trying to figure out how to read the news along with everyone else. Are these any less effective protest messages than a FUCK TRUMP sign on the White House lawn? They both seem just as futile as they are hopeful."

Tucker Nichols lives in Northern California. His work has been featured at the Drawing Center in New York, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Denver Art Museum, Den Frie Museum in Copenhagen, and the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco. His drawings have been published in *McSweeney's*, *The Thing Quarterly*, *Nieves Books* and the Op-Ed pages of *The New York Times*. He is co-author of the books *Crabtree* (with Jon Nichols) and *This Bridge Will Not Be Gray* (with Dave Eggers).