

Todd Bienvenu – *Water Sports* April
6 – May 14, 2017
Opening reception: April 6, 6 – 8 PM



yours mine & ours is pleased to present, *Water Sports*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Todd Bienvenu. *Water Sports* brings together two sides of the artist, the extrovert—loud and bright, cracking jokes and frolicking in the sunshine; and the intimate—made vulnerable by tender paintings of a domestic life wholly different than the sun-soaked beach scenes. Through these works, the viewer is privy to both sides of the goings on of a thirty-something man in New York: sexcapades with his girlfriend, the image of his friend picking a wedgie after a dip in the ocean, a calculator with 8008135 spelled on the screen, are balanced by quiet, introspective views of the city, intimacy shown within the interior of his apartment, and the beauty found in the subtlety of his bathroom sink.

Based on his meanderings, Bienvenu paints what he sees, but with a vivid imagination: wild girls half-naked on the beach opposite a *Thank You* bag stuck to a chain-link fence. He captures a wistfulness for warm days or moments that have a nostalgic air for a different season or life. Even during the summer, the scenes of sun-kissed girls and muscle men wrapped up in tiny speedos leave the viewer wanting or reminiscing about days gone by.

Image detail: Todd Bienvenu, *Underpants* (2016), acrylic on canvas, 24 by 20 inches

Scenes from the more intimate pieces are played out largely in the bedroom and bathroom. The viewer is given access to the mundane and titillating moments conjured up by Bienvenu. Single figures in the act of grooming or copulating appear so at ease that they hardly realize we are on the other side of the mirror watching them. David Attenborough's voice at a whisper explaining the nature of the normal heterosexual Southern male in New York, "A young man in his prime watches a dark haired female specimen shaves her leg hair. He eagerly awaits the next act where he will sniff her butt to arouse himself for fornication." Bienvenu paints figures in all manner of self-care and grooming, one can almost smell the soap and image the skid marks on the tight-whities.

Bienvenu paints directly from his own experiences, making the work easily accessible and candid. The openness of his canvases leaves room for interpretation, giving the viewer plenty of space to insert themselves in whatever capacity they see fit, as a voyeur or spectator, or joining him in a moment of nostalgia. The thoughtful reader will understand that under the brightly colored guise of bikini girls, there is profundity. His work dredges up questions of masculinity, complacency, and anxiety, ultimately bringing to light the very real banality and stillness of a daily existence versus that of the bright and boisterous life advertised.

Todd Bienvenu (b. 1980) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Recent exhibitions include yours mine & ours, New York, NY (solo); Dive, Galerie Sebastien Bertrand, Geneva (solo); There is nothing I could say that I haven't thought before, FLAG Art Foundation; Summer Show, Galerie Sebastien Bertrand, Geneva; Go Figure!, Louis B. James, New York, NY; Let's Walk, Cuevas Tilleard, New York, NY; Exile on Bogart Street, Life on Mars, Brooklyn, NY (solo); Painters NYC, Páramo, Guadalajara, Mexico; Steven Zevitas Gallery, Boston, MA. Bienvenu received his BFA from Louisiana State University and pursued his MFA from the New York Studio School.*