

# frosch & portmann

Seth Michael Forman *SNOW*

frosch&portmann is pleased to present *SNOW*, a selection of winter paintings by Seth Michael Forman. A deliberate painter who spends many months on individual paintings, producing only a few works each year, this is Seth Michael Forman's first solo exhibition in seven years.

Seth Michael Forman's snow is sometimes warm milky white, other times crisply cold or blowing in foggy gusts—but snow is not the true subject of his images. His snow covered trees, boulders, and hills are backdrops. They are remote winterscapes suggestive of psychological isolation and silence, not sound. They are stage sets for Forman's characters, denizens of an imaginary world. At first glance his finely crafted works are unabashedly traditional narrative paintings. Yet these haunting images evoke contemporary feelings of anxiety and sometimes humor. Despite their visual clarity, they pose more questions than they answer, and their perplexing ambiguity reminds us of winter dreams whose detailed events blur and meanings slip away upon waking.

The simply costumed royal protagonist in "King in Winter"—his face reminiscent of Forman's dear departed friend, the painter Michael Goldberg—carries a deer uphill through the snow beneath a flake filled sky. In "The Woodsman," a grey-bearded old man, stark naked but for his underpants and boots, is frigid against a heavy dark cloud. With axe held high above his head, he seems too stiff to ever split the wood before him. Like all the paintings on view in *SNOW*, these are images of autobiography, memory, imagination, and personal symbolism. Inspiration for these paintings comes as much from American folk art and early Netherlandish painting as it does from winters the artist spends in New England's Litchfield Hills.

This is Seth Michael Forman's first solo exhibition at frosch&portmann. His paintings were exhibited in "Picturing the Modern Amazon" at the New Museum of Contemporary Art and were featured on "State of the Arts," a PBS broadcast. His work has been included in over fifty exhibitions, and The New York Foundation for the Arts has twice awarded him Painting Fellowships, first in 2004 and again in 2008.

January 15, 2011 – March 6, 2011  
Hours: Wednesday through Sunday, noon – 6pm

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