

INMAN GALLERY

For Immediate Release
January 11, 2023

Inman Gallery is pleased to present

Emily Joyce
Under The Garden

and

Richard Brown Lethem
Roots, Stones and Baggage

January 14, 2023–February 25, 2023

Artists' reception
Saturday, November 12, 2–4pm



Emily Joyce, *Blue Nile*, 2022
Flashe vinyl paint, acrylic, and metal leaf on canvas over panel
16 x 16 in (40.6 x 40.6 cm)

Inman Gallery is pleased to present two new solo exhibitions, **Emily Joyce: *Under The Garden***, and **Richard Brown Lethem: *Roots, Stones and Baggage***, on view January 14, 2023–February 25, 2023. Please join us **Saturday, January 14** for the opening festivities, beginning with a conversation between the artists at 1pm, moderated by author Jonathan Lethem. After the talk, we will host an **artists' reception from 2–4 pm**.

Former Core Artist in Residence **Emily Joyce** (b. 1976) returns to Houston for her seventh solo exhibition with the gallery. In Joyce's recent symmetrical paintings, she explores hidden systems of nature, the built world, and the cosmos. The paintings are composed of modular and interlocking hexagons, triangles, and concentric circles with special surprise guest appearances by the occasional lily or a bit of gilded text. While in her twenties and fresh out of art school, Joyce worked as a decorative painter, embellishing the walls of mansions and vacation homes. Now, a few decades later, that early training has seeped into her new paintings. In this recent body of work, you'll find combinations of faux-bois, gold leafing, spatter painting, stenciling, rag-rolling, marbelizing etc.—sometimes all in one composition. By assigning each technique to its own specific shape on the canvas, Joyce creates an unfolding pattern and off-beat rhythm. The decorative finishes function as sophisticated painting solutions, rather than tromp-l'oeil trickery. Joyce's presentation includes a site-specific painting onto which other works are hung, a self-referential work that cleverly—and playfully—exemplifies these conceptual underpinnings.

Richard Brown Lethem (b. 1932) has been living and thinking in paint on canvas since the 1950's, with results that have been categorized, more or less aptly, as abstraction, expressionism, figuration, social realism, surrealism, and allegory. Now in his '90's, Lethem's imagery has become unified and direct, often consisting of a central form derived from nature, yet distilled, by the visionary pressure of his attention, into symbols seemingly directly drawn from his psychic landscape, and beamed into that of the viewer. If this is an example of "late style," it is one defiantly uninterested in a modest contemplation of mortality; instead, the painter's wisdom exalts an embrace of color and sensuality, and traces the joyous mystery of our consistent presence as neighboring bodies in a shared field of space.



Richard Brown Lethem, *Russets, One Stone*, 2022
acrylic and charcoal on canvas
24 x 24 x 1 3/8 in (61 x 61 x 3.5 cm)

All but one of the paintings in *Roots, Stones and Baggage* were created in Lethem's new studio in Claremont, CA, where he moved at the beginning of the pandemic to be closer to family. Upon seeing Lethem's first show in Claremont, Joyce knew she had found a kindred spirit. They quickly became "art family," with a mutual affinity for getting deep into seemingly simple things, everyday objects, basic shapes, flat color-painting at its most elemental.

Joyce explains by sharing a Barbara Pym quote: "The small things of life were often so much bigger than the great things . . . the trivial pleasures like cooking, one's home, little poems especially sad ones, solitary walks, funny things seen and overheard."

SPECIAL GALLERY EVENT

Saturday, January 14, 1:00pm. Conversation between Emily Joyce and Brown Lethem, moderated by author Jonathan Lethem.

Jonathan Lethem is the author of twelve novels including *The Fortress of Solitude* and *Chronic City*. His thirteenth, *Brooklyn Crime Novel*, will be published in October. He writes frequently about music, art, film and other cultural subjects for *The New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *Bookforum*, *Medium* and elsewhere. He lives in Brooklyn and Maine.

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