

For immediate release
October 25, 2018

Inman Gallery is pleased to present

BRAD TUCKER
Temporary Relief

November 2, 2018 – January 5, 2019

*Opening reception Friday, November 2,
6–8pm*



Brad Tucker, *Sun*, 2018
enamel and acrylic on board, 24 x 21 inches

Inman Gallery is proud to present *Temporary Relief*, an exhibition of new paintings by Brad Tucker. Opening with an artist's reception from 6–8pm on Friday, November 2, the exhibition will be on view through January 5, 2019.

"Texts are a kind of abstraction," says Brad Tucker. Working from words he encounters in roadside signage and advertisements, Tucker makes paintings on shaped panel, with text extending from the painted surfaces, their wooden reliefs casting shadows over the composition. "Usually the reason I choose a text is because there is a word play there, or slippery grammar," he says. "Something should have an apostrophe or be capitalized, but it isn't... I think of them as authorless texts, meant to operate on you in a quick way. But I'm interested in how—aside from their function as advertising—how do these words or phrases bounce around inside your head?"

In many ways, the questions Tucker asks in *Temporary Relief* are about speed and how we make meaning from abstract things (in this case, both language and non-figurative painting). On a cross-country road-trip, for example, the advertising signage begins to blur in our conscience, making other unexpected meanings and juxtapositions because of the speed with which we absorb them. These texts are meant to be read quickly and to make a lingering impression, not to have many layers of meaning; of course, this absence of meaning makes them susceptible to many kinds of playful mis-readings. This kind of abstracting is something that interests Tucker: "I'm trying to free those texts from their purpose," he says.

Several of the paintings in *Temporary Relief* are on panels that suggest the mound-like architecture of Quonset huts. Their rolling half-oval shapes are paired with familiar advertising phrases: "Sign up today," "Walk ins welcome," or the mysterious "The right light for watching movies." A red SUN in italicized all-caps hovers on a yellow almost-circle, as if this abstracted sun is either rising or setting. During recent travels through West Texas, Colorado, and California, Tucker found himself drawn to roadside architecture. Specifically, he reflects on how the Quonset huts he passed are situated within the landscape. "They look kind of flat as I drive by them," he says, "but they have this landscape element: they echo the mountains. It's impossible to capture the experience of being in the landscape, but we can make a mental picture of the landscape, an abstracted and very simplified representation of mountains, for

example." The Quonset hut gets at that landscape mirroring, making a small-scale gesture toward mountain-ness, while maintaining its strange architectural autonomy. That playful ambiguity, in which the viewer pauses briefly to wonder about the other potential meanings of a half-remembered and creatively punctuated thing is where Tucker's paintings pause and make a knowing wink at the viewer.



Brad Tucker, *Walk Ins Welcome*, 2018, acrylic on canvas and wood, 24 x 95 inches

While this new body of work is infused with Tucker's iconic humor, that humor is also weighted with a certain gravitas. In the painting "the mens center is being rebuilt," Tucker cites a sign from the immediate neighborhood of Inman Gallery, at the nearby Recenter. The piece references the micro-local, but also the ever-changing urban landscape of Houston. In titling his exhibition, then, Tucker returns to a related idea, about respite and finding a place to pause. "That's also what making art means to me, that temporary relief," he says. "It seemed too much to say there would be permanent relief of anything for anybody." Instead, in the moments of working through an image or idea, that is, in smiling at the ambiguities of a highway sign or in teasing out the many potential meanings of an abstraction, one might find a momentary peace from the pressures of the world, a kind of sustaining nourishment, even in times of trouble.

Brad Tucker (born 1965, West Covina, CA) earned a BFA from the University of North Texas, Denton (1991) and an MFA from the Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY (2009). Tucker has exhibited and performed internationally for the past two decades, including solo exhibitions at Inman Gallery, Houston, TX (2015, 2012, and 2009); Re Gallery, Dallas, Texas (2015); Old Jail Art Center, Albany TX (2013); and Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX (2011). From 1999-2000 Tucker was an artist resident in the Core Program, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX. His work is included in the public collections of the Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; the Menil Collection, Houston, TX; the New Museum, New York, NY; and the Plains Museum, Fargo, ND. Tucker lives and works in Austin, TX.

SPECIAL EVENT

Saturday, November 3, 1:00pm.

Conversation between artist Brad Tucker and Kate Green, Senior Curator, El Paso Museum of Art.

For information contact the gallery at kerry@inmangallery.com, or 713-526-7800.