

PRESS RELEASE

Valery Yershov: Lost Wanderings

February 26 – March 11, 2010

Opening reception: Friday, March 5, 6:30 – 11 pm

Kolodzei Art Foundation, and Barbarian Art Gallery by Natasha Akhmerova, in collaboration with Phenomena Project are pleased to present *Valery Yershov: Lost Wanderings* at White Box, 329 Broome Street, New York, New York. The exhibition will run from February 26 to March 11, 2010.

Lost Wanderings traces the journey of New York-based Russian artist Valery Yershov into an ambivalent and ironic present. Yershov's paintings appeal to the viewer on both analytical and emotional levels while illuminating broad aspects of human experience. Artists, entrepreneurs, cowboys, historical figures and hippies are seen displaced from their usual environment and positioned among tree trunks of the forest. Over the past decade, Yershov's signature style has forged a delicate balance between dream and reality, theatricality, and absurdity, orchestrated with an acute attention to detail.

Valery Yershov was born in 1960 in Yessentuki (located at the base of the Caucasus Mountains), Soviet Union, and studied at the Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) State Repin Academic Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. Yershov then worked at the artists' community at Furmany Lane in Moscow (along with many widely recognized *perestroika* generation artists). Since 1989, Valery Yershov has lived and worked in New York

In *Lost Wanderings*, Yershov's reflections on the phenomena of art and public life become clearly outlined through his artistic process, adaptation and reconciliation with a new life, and his own cultural wanderings. In the past fifteen years, Yershov has explored the artistic traditions of Realism while staking a position for figurative painting in a neo-conceptual art era. It is the fusion between daily reality and popular culture which interests the artist. In *Lost Wanderings*, Yershov avoids any direct political messages; rather than straightforward depictions, he reveals poetic truths and the personal struggle of an individual. Valery Yershov does not impose his own reading on his paintings; instead, he suggests the ambivalence of meaning and encouraging multiple readings of his work.

Yershov's imagery evokes a complex range of human emotions: danger, psychological discomfort, and hope. He does not depict leaves or branches on trees, thus depriving the forest of any temporal or seasonal changes; instead the permanence of nature as foregrounded in the outlines of rock-solid tall tree trunks is juxtaposed with the fragility and uncertainty of the individual, creating an evocative contrast. Certain subjects imbued with biographical history can elicits nostalgic memories of Yershov's childhood; remnants of the Russian empire allude to the cultural and historical memory during the tumultuous times of the Soviet era. Each generation and diaspora creates a unique cultural heritage, but once an individual is placed into a new system, he or she may experience a sense of insecurity and fear of an unknown future, thus resulting in feelings of loss, displacement and wandering. By placing characters into this nonrealistic space, Yeshov highlights a unique subjective human essence.

For more information please contact: Susie Lim of White Box at 212-714-2347 or Susie@whitebox.org; Natalia Kolodzei of Kolodzei Art Foundation at Kolodzei@KolodzeiArt.org or visit www.KolodzeiArt.org; and Natasha Akhmerova of Barbarian Art Gallery at Nakhmerova@barbarian-art.com or visit www.barbarian-art.com.

White Box, 329 Broome Street, New York. Hours: Monday to Sunday 11 to 6 pm