

Marlborough

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TOMÁS SÁNCHEZ

Buscador de paisajes

New Paintings and Drawings

November 28 through December 30, 2005

The Directors of Marlborough Gallery are pleased to announce the opening of an exhibition of new work by the Cuban landscape artist, Tomás Sánchez. Sánchez is one of the finest and most singular artists to emerge from Cuba in the last twenty-five years. This show will mark the artist's second exhibition of paintings at Marlborough New York and it should prove to be what *The New York Times* in an earlier review called "an awesome but peaceable spectacle."

The show will consist of approximately twelve paintings and four works on paper which depict idealized land and waterscapes of dense tropical forests, some with cascading waterfalls, others with brooding cloud formations and still others which include either one or two human figures or birds. In all the works nature reigns supreme and bespeaks of majesty and splendor, and when human beings are present they are dwarfed by the immensity of nature's grandeur. The paintings act as a metaphor for spirituality and the sublime in nature and in this regard they hark back to artists like Caspar David Friedrich and the Hudson River Illuminists. But as *Art News* has pointed out "scenes that at first look hyperrealistic then turn increasingly dreamlike and surreal," an idea which the scholar Edward J. Sullivan has related to Magritte: "The way Sánchez uses light and creates this silvery, even, unnuanced light makes it feel almost as if we are looking at things from which all the air has been sucked. He has distilled the atmosphere and created these spaces that are intensely quiet, which I always associate with Magritte."

Sánchez infuses his landscape scenes with what the Cuban art critic, Geraldo Mosquera, called "an almost metaphysical vision." This is not surprising considering that Sánchez is ardently devoted to yoga and to meditation which he practices several hours daily. He also goes regularly to a Siddha Yoga retreat in upstate New York. One French critic wrote at the time of the artist's show in Paris that Sánchez' work is "a mixture of extreme precision and meditation, of yearning and radiance." When Sánchez was 20 he attended the National School of Art in Havana where he met the expressionist painter Antonia Eiriz who was a pivotal influence on his development. He says, "she was interested not in how you painted something but in how you saw it." One might conclude from that statement that while the ostensible subject of Sánchez' evocative and meticulously painted landscapes is nature, his paintings are in fact expressions of how he views the landscape and in so being they act as states of thought, becoming a kind of contained time frame of meditative thinking, transmuting mental quietude and reverence for nature.

Sánchez was born in 1948 in central Cuba in the village of Aguada de Pasajeros. A shy youth he would spend long hours exploring the woods around his home and then return and draw what he had seen. In 1964 he studied for two years at the San Alejandro School of Plastic Arts in Havana and later at the aforementioned National School of Art. In 1980 he won the Joan Miró Drawing Prize given by the Miró Foundation in Barcelona and in 1984 he won the Amelia Peláez Award for painting at Havana's first biennial. In 1985 he had his first retrospective at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Havana. In 1989 he left Cuba to live in Mexico. After spending a few years there he moved to southern Florida, and in 1995 had his first exhibition in the United States. In 2003 a substantial monograph on the artist was published by *Skira* with an essay by the South American author, Gabriel García Márquez and text by Edward J. Sullivan. Sánchez currently lives and works in Miami and Costa Rica.

An illustrated color catalogue of the Sánchez show will be available at the time of the exhibition.

The reception for the artist will take place at the gallery Tuesday, December 6th from 6:00 to 8:00 PM

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