

Modern Painters Daily

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Tomorrow: "Occult Contemporary" in Chelsea

By Modern Painters

"Occult Contemporary," the title of Detroit-based artist Hernan Bas's exhibition at Lehmann Maupin Gallery in Chelsea, is a spin on "adult contemporary," the term used to describe light pop music. The paintings in the show, which opens tomorrow evening, all deal in some form or another with notions of the supernatural. We don't need to tell you about how fashionable the theme of the occult is these days—just look at the young adult section in bookstores, turn on your television, or go to the movies, where werewolves, vampires, and other otherworldly beings have a near monopoly. But Bas has a different take on it. In some of the paintings, the Devil is "just some guy who is trying to do his job," Bas tells us. But leave Satan aside: the paintings are lush and beautiful, and show influences as varied as the works of Eugene Delacroix and Abstract Expressionism, alongside the writing of Beaudelaire and the story of 17th-century composer Giuseppe Tartini.