



rainforest study III
acrylic on paper, mounted on panel, 13" x 20"



rainforest study II
acrylic on paper, mounted on panel, 13" x 20"



rainforest study I
acrylic on paper, mounted on panel, 13" x 20"



rainforest 6
oil on canvas, 40" x 60"

DREW KLASSEN

ELSEWHERE

April 3 - 24, 2009

GALLERY PAGE AND STRANGE is a contemporary gallery located in the historic Granville Square of downtown Halifax, Nova Scotia. In close proximity to NSCAD University and other fine art shops and restaurants, the gallery is situated within the heart of the cultural district of the city.

**GALLERY
PAGE AND
STRANGE**

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

DREW KLASSEN was born in Toronto, grew up in Winnipeg and came to Halifax to study in 1986. He spent two years at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design before transferring to the Technical University of Nova Scotia, where he graduated with an M.Arch in 1992.

In 1998, after a creatively successful but penurious career in architecture, Klassen returned to life as a painter; and since then he has exhibited in Canada, the United States and Japan. His work is held in numerous private collections in Canada, Japan and the U.S.; corporate or institutional collections in Halifax, Oslo and Hamilton (Bermuda); and was included in the Olympic Commemorative Exhibition in Nagano, Japan in 1998, and in the Royal Canadian Academy "Arts 2000" millennial exhibition in Stratford, Ontario in 2000. Klassen was a member of the Exhibition Committee of Visual Arts Nova Scotia in 2001, a member of the board of eyelevelgallery in 2005, and received a creation grant from the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage in 2007. He has taught drawing at the Dalhousie University Department of Theatre, representational practise and theory in the undergraduate and graduate programs at the Dalhousie University School of Architecture, and painting at NSCAD University. He currently lives and works in Halifax.

ELSEWHERE

A year and a half ago I sublet my studio, packed away my paints, and took seven months' hiatus to travel with my partner. The timing was fortuitous: I'd recently finished a significant body of work for a solo exhibition, and my eyes, my mind and my premise were exhausted.

I didn't set out consciously looking for a new way to paint, but not long into the trip I realized that, on top of my 50-odd-pound pack, I was lugging around an inchoate discontent. I realized that for most of my career my painting had been a struggle to organize and control the image, that it was becoming increasingly difficult to produce fresh and compelling work within the constraints I'd set myself, and that to move forward as a painter I needed to find a way to shrug off the burden of artifice: to find a way to cultivate my work rather than constructing it.

As it happened, I found what I needed in the rainforests and plantations of the Western Ghats in India, and later in the jungles of Thailand and Cambodia. I found myself in places without a centre, without a focus, immeasurable by geometry, ungoverned by horizon lines or vanishing points: places of rampant, luxurious growth, of shadows and scintilla, layered, dense and complex. I've been lost in them ever since.

Drew Klassen

RIGHT: plantation 3 oil on panel, 36" x 48"

