



Bryan LeBoeuf, *Error of Margins*, 2006, oil on canvas, 105" x 118", 511.

Bryan LeBoeuf

511

The Louisiana-born painter Bryan LeBoeuf displayed his facility with oils and anatomy in this strongly figurative show. A number of the paintings dealt with the artist's memories of the South and bore hints of menace in dramatic scenes intensified by the incompleteness of their narratives.

In *Phone Call* (2005), a child plays alone in a kitchen with its various attendant dangers in full view. Depicted from above, the perils are itemized for the viewer.

In *Sow* (2006), a woman crouches in front of a gold-flushed sky, a shovel in her hand, but it is impossible to determine whether she is reaching out to bury or to uncover something. Working from a low vantage point, LeBoeuf devotes more than half of this canvas to portraying the dirt. It's a picture with considerable staying power. Especially daunting and dramatic was *Error of Margins* (2006), dominated by a looming nine-foot elephant.

At his best, LeBoeuf can hold the viewer's eye with very little effort. The twinned female figures bathing in *Rorschach Effect* (2004) could be seen as an exercise in doubling, but this effect is undone by the rest of the painting's compelling asymmetry.

Threshold (2006) perfectly conveys the slack weight of a body being carried. While the uneasy figures of the family in *Swimming Lesson* (2005) hint at the psychologically fraught characters portrayed by Eric Fischl, the bodies in LeBoeuf's paintings express a primarily physical anguish. Here, with the small boy's ballooning trunks and flexed legs, all the trauma of abandonment is conveyed in his newly acquired buoyancy. Letting the figure speak in this way, LeBoeuf has no real need for stories.

—Ingrid Periz