

## ARTS & BOOKS

### [Paintings in Californian Wonderland](#)

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**Visitors coming to Mark Ryden's new exhibition in Los Angeles are expected to be wearing brown and green clothes to experience fully the artist's "Tree Show."**

Mark Ryden's most recent paintings will be on display from March 10th to April 28th 2007 at the Michael Kohn Gallery in Los Angeles. This gallery, created in 1985, previously hosted the works of modern masters such as Picasso and Andy Warhol. This new exhibition, entitled "The Tree Show," features many wondrous forest-scapes and fantastic garden scenes by one of the most en vogue contemporary American painters.

Ryden was born in 1963 in Oregon. He lives and works in Los Angeles where his first solo exhibition "The Meat Show" took place in 1998. His last major museum retrospective, "Wondertoone1," travelled from the Frye Museum of Art in Seattle to the Pasadena Museum of California Art in 2005.

While both "Wondertoone1" and "The Tree show" are loosely inspired by *Alice in Wonderland* and its dream-like universe, Ryden's paintings can be rather disquieting. His canvasses are often filled with young children covered in blood and strange toy-like animals. Infants, slabs of meat, religious and alchemical symbols are juxtaposed in cartoon-like landscapes that are as colourful as their subject is actually dark. Ryden's work is loaded with echoes of surrealist paintings as well as classical references to Bosch and Bruegel. His masterful technique and painting skills are widely celebrated.

Ryden's works are not confined to art galleries though. In the last few years he has created several famous album covers such as Michael Jackson's *Dangerous* or the Red Hot Chili Peppers' *One Hot Minute*. Ryden is said to have many collectors in show business. Stephen King, Leonardo DiCaprio, and the composer Danny Elfman for instance are among his most faithful admirers.

Sources and links to pictures:

<http://www.kohngallery.com/>

[www.markryden.com](http://www.markryden.com)

[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)