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## PRESS RELEASE

GALLERY I

# HARLAND MILLER OVERCOMING OPTIMISM

3 November 2012 – 26 January 2013

For Harland Miller's first exhibition in Scotland, Ingleby Gallery presents a group of new paintings alongside a selected survey of the artist's work across several years. Common to all of these paintings is a basic structure of shape borrowed from decades of Penguin paperbacks: a motif that automatically suggests a very British kind of nostalgia, but which Miller turns back on itself with invented titles that prove the dictum that you can't judge a book, or a painting at least, by its cover.



There's humour in these paintings, but often of a fairly bleak kind, and a grim pathos balancing out Miller's instinctively irreverent wit. They are funny, and then sometimes, unexpectedly, they are sad - a moment of melancholy shifting the pace - but always they are painted with a sense of Miller's delight in the physical act of painting itself, and a loving respect for the book as an object.

For all the pop art implications of book covers carrying words, Miller's paintings nod to what he describes as a "sleeves-rolled-up kind of painting". Fighting against their own formality with a fluid delight in the sweeps, drips and smudges of paint, that suggest a debt to the painterly legacy of de Kooning and Rothko as much as to the textual polish of Ed Ruscha.



Miller is both a writer and artist (his debut novel *Slow Down Arthur Stick to Thirty* was published in 2000) and his paintings of books simultaneously provide a subject for the painter and an outlet for the writer. They combine the emotive possibilities of abstract expressionism with the quick punch of words to deliver their message, and for all the macho grist of their making, and often overwhelming scale, they somehow express a frailty that hints at the human condition. As Miller has said: "Painting is the worst medium to express narrative, but perhaps the best to hit a nerve".

Harland Miller was born in Yorkshire in 1964. He has lived in New York and Berlin and currently lives and works in London.

For further information about the exhibition program and related events, please contact the Gallery on 0131 556 4441 or [info@inglebygallery.com](mailto:info@inglebygallery.com)  
Images - Top: *You Can Rely on Me - I'll Always Let You Down*, 2011; Bottom: *Fuck Art, Let's Dance* (Detail), 2011