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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Emil Lukas
Larva, Bubble, and Thread
25 February – 26 March 2011

Sperone Westwater is pleased to announce *Larva, Bubble, and Thread*, an exhibition of new mixed-media paintings by Emil Lukas. Lukas uses larva, bubble wrap and thread, along with the more traditional materials of paint, ink and paper. His works juxtapose pattern and randomness and reflect the intricacies of nature, and the beauty that grows from chaos as well as the everyday. This is the artist's first exhibition at Sperone Westwater.

Lukas' thread paintings are at once random, yet precisely composed. For works such as *Floating Bowl* (2010) and *Son* (2010), Lukas pulls thousands of colored threads from one side of a frame to another. Lukas avoids repeating the same angle, while making an effort to cover up certain areas of the composition and leave other parts vacant. In describing his process, Lukas says he is "constantly finding a pattern and dividing or dispersing it...the pattern is almost the denial of a pattern." Up close, one can see a multitude of colors, threads, angles, and lines, but from a distance each work dissolves into a symmetrical composition, suggestive of a mathematical and architecturally driven process.

The element of chance is present throughout Lukas' larva works. In paintings such as *Twine* (2010), the artist releases larvae into a sealed, prepared, environment where moisture, light, ink and paint color are controlled. As the larvae travel across the surface, they interact with the paint and ink, creating random and sinewy lines. Lukas establishes the context; however, it is the larvae's movement that produces the marks – the traces of nature, the abstract remains of passage.

Unlike the larva works, Lukas' bubble paintings originate from a common, man-made material. For works like *In Side* (2010), Lukas makes watercolor paper cast from a sheet of bubble wrap. The back of the cotton/bubble mold is flat like a traditional canvas, while the front is undulated and shaped by the impression of the bubbles.

Born in 1964 in Pittsburgh, PA, Emil Lukas had his first solo show in 1985 and has since continued to exhibit throughout the United States and abroad. Lukas has had solo exhibitions at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, CT, The Mattress Factory in Pittsburgh, PA and The Weatherspoon Museum in Greensboro, NC.

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