**Paul Ryan***On The Hop: New Paintings*November 2 – December 22, 2012  
Artist Statement

The title of this exhibition comes from a statement in cultural critic Terry Eagleton’s book, *The Idea of Culture*, which reminds us that we exist between nature and culture, and that this condition is part of what makes life challenging as well as interesting: “We are not so much splendid syntheses of nature and culture, materiality and meaning, as amphibious animals caught on the hop between angel and beast.” These new paintings express my interest in how we process experience as we live in the interstices between our biological/chemical/geological geographies and the ideologies and desires that construct our identities and affect our modes of being. Exploring this state of mixed uncertainties through the belief that we see and experience through language, texts, ideologies, the paintings employ an offbeat poetry of forms derived from nature -- cross-cut images of trees, profiles of tree tops, insects, human organs -- and human social construction and exchange as signified in commercial packaging. Paralleling structuralist practices, this work explores the ambiguities of howwe create meaning and process experience.