



**PRESS RELEASE:**  
**PARISITES – Julien Berthier, Lily Phung and Nicolas Pol**  
**Allsopp Contemporary, May 26<sup>th</sup> – June 24<sup>th</sup> 2006**

Allsopp Contemporary is proud to announce its forthcoming group show *PARISITES*, opening in May 2006. *PARISITES* will present paintings, works on paper and installations from these three young Parisian artists.

Julien Berthier, Lily Phung and Nicolas Pol can all be said to make varying degrees of social comment through notions of the past, present and the fantastical. **Lily Phung** subverts the nostalgia of 50s advertising with teasing surface-based text ('peas off') and layers of gesturally applied paint. Her dark, heavily worked canvases hover between a longed-for past and a cynical, confused present. As a painter she is now divorced from the safe-haven of art school, as a young French woman she is embarking upon a life within a rapidly changing French social and political setting. 'Valentines day is a joke' reads across the bottom of a large canvas – one feels Phung's profound cynicism masks a genuine longing for a vanishing, innocent youth.

**Nicolas Pol** pushes to breaking point our acceptance of fact within an environmentally and socially decrepit society and seems to offer solace in the world of painted fantasy. His first solo exhibition *Life Goes On If You're Lucky* (Allsopp Contemporary, 2005) had as its centre piece the Swiss Sticks: fantastical apparatus able to release electro-magnetic currents to cope with the catastrophic consequences of the magnetic poles inverting. As with Phung, Pol is primarily a painter – one however who channels his three dimensional inventions back through the two dimensions of a canvas. As the viewer is constantly fed new information and new solutions Pol seems to be commenting on both the scare tactics of contemporary media, the seductive world of fantasy (creative, social or political) and the oft' told promise that, to use Berthier's phrase, "Everything's Gonna be Alright".

**Julien Berthier's** inventions, installations and happenings offer clear social comment through absurdist techniques. *POTATO TAG*, a giant fibre glass potato print with the objection 'NO' emblazoned across the front will be shown for the first time at the gallery. The significance of the statement, in the current socio-economic climate of the French state is hard to miss. Berthier's work, much like Pol's, is rooted in inventions. Both start with a conceived reality and develop it to a point where it serves their thematic and artistic ends. Where Berthier's work relates to Phung's is through the idea of the outsider. Phung dips into accepted past iconography as an outsider trapped in the present; Berthier too appears on the edge of society outlining the twisted and warped reasoning that infiltrates our everyday lives.

*Julien Berthier (b.1975), Lily Phung (b.1977) and Nicolas Pol (b.1977) all graduated within three years of each other from the Ecole de Beaux-Arts, Paris. Julien Berthier has had solo shows in Paris (Galerie Vallois 2002 and 2004), Cologne (fw Gallery, 2005) and Naples (Gallerie Blindarte, also 2005). His video piece 'Silent sentinels has been selected for ART FILM, ART BASEL 37. Nicolas Pol enjoyed outstanding success with his first solo show Life Goes On If You're Lucky (Allsopp Contemporary, London 2005) whilst Lily Phung will exhibit in her first exhibition since the Fondation Cartier Graduate show, J-en Rêve in 2005.*

*PARISITES* will open on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2006 at Allsopp Contemporary, West London.