

# GLADSTONE GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Matthew Barney "Ancient Evenings: Libretto"

March 20 through May 9, 2009  
Opening March 19 from 6-9 pm  
Rue du Grand Cerf 12 Grote Hertstraat – 1000 Brussels

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new drawings by Matthew Barney from *Ancient Evenings*, a seven act opera loosely based on Norman Mailer's 1983 Egyptian-set novel and currently in development by Barney and composer Jonathan Bepler.

Each act of the opera chronicles one of the seven stages that the soul passes through after the death of the body. Remaining true to the original theme of rebirth and reincarnation, *Ancient Evenings* recasts the central myth of Isis and Osiris in a contemporary industrial landscape. Barney has replaced the human body with the body of the 1967 Chrysler Imperial that was the central motif from his earlier film *Cremaster 3*. This exhibition will include drawings that explore the character and thematic development of the first two acts, entitled "Ren" and "Sekhem." Obsessively drawn, Barney's graphite drawings map the conceptual depths of each project rather than presenting storyboard-like narratives. Barney evokes his beautifully rendered imagery with the addition of non-traditional materials such as petroleum jelly and metal leaf, in addition to lapis dust and PCL, a plastic derived from crude oil. Alongside these drawings, Barney has taken seven copies of Mailer's novel to create unique sculptures inside wall-mounted vitrines. Each piece contains one copy resting upon a bed of carved salt and opened to a spread that bears a drawing pertaining to one of the seven stages of the soul. In co-mingling Barney's draftsmanship with passages that comprise the opera's libretto, each book represents a different aspect of Barney's new interpretation of Mailer's novel.

Matthew Barney was born in 1967 and studied art at Yale University. He has received numerous awards including the Aperto prize at the 1993 Venice Biennale; the 1996 Hugo Boss Award; and the 2007 Kaiser Ring Award. He has been included in group exhibitions worldwide such as Documenta IX in Kassel, Germany; the Whitney Biennials of 1993 and 1995; and the groundbreaking "Post-Human" exhibition in 1992. His solo exhibition "The Cremaster Cycle," organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, traveled to the Museum Ludwig, Cologne, and the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. The large-scale exhibition of the entire "Drawing Restraint" series was organized by the 21st Century Museum for Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, and traveled to Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Serpentine Gallery, London; and Kunsthalle Vienna. A retrospective of the *Cremaster* and *Drawing Restraint* videos was presented by the Fondazione Merz, Torino, in 2008.

Act 1 of *Ancient Evenings*, "Ren," was performed in Los Angeles in May 2008.  
Acts 2 - 4 are currently in production for summer 2009.

For further information please contact Sybille du Roy  
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Opening hours : Tuesday - Saturday, 12-6 pm

Also on view :

515 West 24<sup>th</sup> Street, New York

Andrew Lord opening February 27, 2009

530 West 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
2009

Thomas Hirschhorn through April 11,