

GLADSTONE GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Carroll Dunham March 24 through April 21, 2007

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new paintings by Carroll Dunham. Since the early 1980s when he based his exuberant organic painting style on the pre-existing knots and whirls in wood panels, Dunham's works have followed multiple courses: a formal mastery of line, texture, and color and an evolutionary investigation of psychically charged imagery. The paintings on view in this exhibition explore both of these channels and unite their differing aspects.

Long synthesizing the precedents set by divergent schools of paintings, including Cubism, Abstract Expressionism, and Pop, with the cheeky graphics associated with comics and graffiti, Dunham has been able to create a body of work rich in formal accomplishment and unique in visual content. As amoebic shapes evolved into grotesque figures, his paintings became tacit observations on both painting and society. With each turn of the development, a deeper sense of consciousness reveals itself, as if various psycho-sexual drives churning below percolate to the very surface of the canvas.

The most apparent symptom of these drives would be the fedora-wearing, phallus-nosed character, a lone wanderer along Dunham's conceptual trajectory. Through landscapes bulging with trash to skewed portraits in which he seems jailed behind the very geometries that outline his singular contours, this character becomes a fetish doll held in the sway of both the artist's expressions and properties of paint. Perhaps he is a monolithic totem of masochism and psychological surrender, or just a man in a grey flannel suit. Fragmented, castrated, and possibly left for dead, he keeps returning for more. As curator Asmund Thorkildsen says in his essay to Dunham's recent retrospective of small drawings, "One could say that this figure...is the provisional result of a struggle for survival. He has proved the fittest." In recent paintings, he appears splayed out across asymmetrical diptychs, exposed and vulnerable, as if Dunham ponders the question of survival at what cost.

Carroll Dunham was born in 1949 and currently lives and works in New York and Connecticut. He has been the subject of numerous one-person exhibitions, including a mid-career retrospective at the New Museum in New York in 2002. His work has been included in several Whitney Biennials and in "Disparities and Deformations: Our Grotesque," SITE Santa Fe's fifth biennial curated by Robert Storr. In 2008 a survey of his complete prints will open at the Addison Gallery of American Art in Andover, Massachusetts.

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10am – 6pm
For further information please contact Adam Ottavi-Schiesl
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