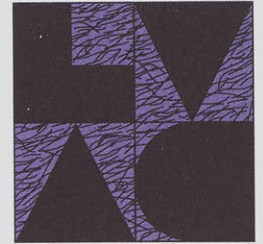


N E W S R E L E A S E

The Anxious Salon
Narrative Content in Recent Figurative Painting

October 15 - December 19, 1993
Opening reception: Friday, October 15, 5-7 pm



The Anxious Salon includes the work of five contemporary painters working within an academic or "Old Master" figurative narrative style, who update the tradition with ambiguous or disturbing contemporary content. Represented mostly by monumentally-scaled canvases, the three North American and two Norwegian artists included in the exhibition are Vincent Desiderio, Attila Richard Lukacs, Odd Nerdrum, Hanneline Røgeberg and Thomas Woodruff. In painting styles ranging from the illustrational to the grandiloquent, these artists demonstrate the virtuosic technical facility generally regarded as the basis of "good" or "serious" art as conventionally defined in the Western artistic tradition. Initially familiar and inviting due to their masterful representationalism, these paintings seduce the viewer wary of much of today's cool, conceptual art until their psychologically complex and morally ambiguous subject matter makes itself felt.

In the works of Desiderio, Lukacs, Nerdrum, Røgeberg and Woodruff, among others, we are witnessing a qualified return to beauty, an indulgence in the display of the nude body and in the physical act of painting. The presentation is, however, flawed, for the classical equation of the beautiful with the good no longer holds. These artists take the pervasive anxiety and pessimism of our times as their context and subject. Both artist and viewer therefore confront a dilemma: how to reconcile a painting vocabulary which had confirmed the human being in the world with an overriding message of alienation.

The exhibition includes Desiderio's immense psychical narrative triptych *Romance and Reunion*, Lukacs' imposing, erotically-charged groupings of skinheads, Nerdrum's hapless wanderers in barren landscapes, Røgeberg's interlocked arrangements of multi-generational women, and self-portraits from Woodruff's *Chromatic Aberration* series of the artist as a symbol-laden crying clown.

A full-color brochure, with reproductions of the artist's work, as well as texts by exhibition curators Ron Platt and Helaine Posner, accompanies the exhibition. **An informal gallery talk will be held on Saturday, October 16 at 3 pm, with artists Røgeberg, Woodruff, Desiderio, and the two curators.**

The List Visual Arts Center is located at 20 Ames Street in Cambridge, a five minute walk from the Kendall Square Red Line T Station. Parking is available at the corner of Main and Ames Streets. Due to construction, Ames Street is presently closed, and the Center is accessible from Amherst Street only. Call 617/253-4680 for more specific directions.

Our new gallery hours are: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday: 12-6; Wednesday: 12-8; Saturday & Sunday: 1-5. Every Wednesday between 12:30 and 1:30 a member of our curatorial staff will be in the gallery to respond to questions or comments regarding our exhibitions or exhibition program. Admission to all List Center exhibitions and events is free and open to the public.

For further information or publicity materials contact Ron Platt at 617/253-4400.