

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS

- Press Release for immediate release -

Dokoupil: Man Ray Picabia Richter and Bond – James Bond 26 November – 22 January 2009

Ben Brown Fine Arts is delighted to present an exhibition of new paintings by Jiri Georg Dokoupil, one of the most creative and interesting artists of his generation. Born in Krnow (Czechoslovakia) in 1954, Dokoupil and his family moved to Germany in 1968. He studied art in Cologne, Frankfurt and New York, and currently works between Berlin, Madrid, Prague and Rio de Janeiro.

This is the first exhibition of Dokoupil's work to be held in London since the 1980s, and Ben Brown is very excited at the opportunity to show the work of such a seminal artist in the new space at 12 Brook's Mews.

In the early 1980s Dokoupil emerged as a leading champion of a new generation of international artists who, in opposition to the minimal and conceptual art of the 1970s, rediscovered painting and the use of figurative, expressionist images. In America artists such as Julian Schnabel, David Salle and Jean Michel Basquiat championed figurative painting and in Italy the Transavanguardia, which held emotion and human imagination above rational principles, emerged to challenge Arte Povera. In Germany, the Mülheimer Freiheit group, which Dokoupil briefly was part of, explored the contemporary expression of traditional figurative styles in intensely colourful paintings, whose roots could be found in Dada and Surrealism.

Working with and developing a vast gamut of new painting techniques and imagery over the years - celebrated in several international museum shows including the seminal Documenta 7 in 1982 - Dokoupil's highly individual, often ironic and subversive imagination found expression in the famous series of soot pictures, soap bubble pictures and tire pictures of the late 1980s and 1990s.

The present group of works - the Movies and TV paintings - epitomises the astonishing diversity of artistic approaches that has marked Dokoupil's oeuvre. His interest in recording movement two-dimensionally dates to as early as 1977, but his radical idea of transcribing a film's entire visual content onto a single panel without subjectively selecting individual frames explored in these works only became possible with the advance of technology. Only recently ink-jet printing has reached a quality and level of resolution that has made this kind of printing possible, though the artist has been experimenting with this idea for at least 7 years.

In these paintings, Dokoupil has taken a film that would normally be projected sequentially at high speed (over 24 frames per second), and transferred it horizontally onto canvas frame by frame, complete with opening credits and end titles. The dimensions of the finished works thus depend on the duration of the film, or a pre-determined fast-forward increment, and the reproduction size chosen for the individual frames.

The group of works presented here ranges from a whole James Bond movie, *From Russia with Love*, printed onto a canvas 7 meters long, to some wonderful 1920s experimental films such as the *Ballet Mécanique*, *Diagonal Symphony* of 1921, *Picabia* of 1924 and *Emak Bakia*.

Catalogue available

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