

AFP Gallery
The Fuller Building, 41 East 57th St., 7th floor
presents
Getting From Here To There: Images In and About Transition
Curated by Robert G. Edelman

February 8 – March 20, 2012,
Opening reception February 15, 6 to 8 pm



Yayoi Kusama
Here Comes the Village of Satan, 1975
Pastel, gouache, collage on paper, 23 x 15"
Private collection

Artists in the exhibition:

Alison Berry
Peggy Cyphers
Debra Drexler
Sally Egbert
Ilona Granet
Nancy Grimes
Julian Hatton
Anton Henning
Mary Hrbacek
David Kapp

Kika Karadi
William Kentridge
Yayoi Kusama
Ellen Lanyon
Sol LeWitt
Timothy Linn
Robert Lobe
David Lowe
Rifka Milder
Paton Miller
and Willem de Kooning

Andre von Morisse
Robert Reitzfeld
Lucy Reitzfeld
Grace Roselli
Silas Shabelewska
Mark Sheinkman
Frank Stella
David True
Carol Warner
Joe Zucker

Press Release

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AFP Gallery, 41 East 57th St., New York, (212) 230-1003, Mon. – Fri., 10 – 5, or by appt.

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“If you are an artist the problem is to make a picture work whether you are happy or not.”

Willem de Kooning

The recent MoMA survey exhibition of the tumultuous body (literally) of work of Willem de Kooning was a timely opportunity for artists and art lovers to assess a career that has in many ways encapsulated the roller-coaster ride of 20th century art. What is quite apparent after walking through the show, finishing in the room of sublime and poetic works from the 80s (in spite of his dementia), is that de Kooning never felt that he had to choose between so called representation and abstraction; that one fed the other, and an artist could and must pursue their path regardless of trends, doctrine, punditry, market pressures and public opinion. To say that de Kooning followed his inner demon/angel is merely to state the obvious, except that we need to be reminded that a post-Clement Greenberg manifesto (i.e., paintings should to be true to their two-dimensional surface) environment finds us back at square one: how to make a work of art that comes from personal experience and vision and still be a part in the contemporary dialogue of a post-modern era.

This exhibition is conceived on the premise that representational and abstract art must not only co-exist; they can and should also have a conversation. The underlying or unifying premise for this show is that artists are always challenged by the process of bringing an image/composition to life, making it come alive whether it's what one expects when starting out, arriving at some final resting, or unsettling, place. This sense of place, of a world in transition, can be expressed in ways that are more elusive than labels like representation and abstraction, so that a viewer can also get past these distinctions and their obvious limitations. A viewer can and should also be able to see how each artist has taken liberties, or reinvented their imagery or iconography to make it work, despite moving toward or away from the limits or mere representation or post Ab-Ex doctrine.

The artists' work included in this exhibition represents a contemporaneous cross-section of the challenges of image invention and realization that has been an issue for more than 100 years in Western art. In the US, each decade since the 1940's has brought to a sea change in philosophy and approach to artistic production, as if this were a necessity or a mandate of cultural evolution. Today one sees almost every one of these collective “movements”; Ab-Ex, Color-Field, Op and Pop Art, Minimalism, Performance and Conceptual, Photorealism and Neo-Expressionism, finally evolving into a broadly-defined sense of the Post-Modern, which seems to encompass many if not all of these approaches.

The creative process is about, among other things, the distinctive movement and energy of the artist's hand (using charcoal, brush, camera or metal, etc.), the interpretation of the visual world through form, light, shadow and color, and perhaps most of all, the process of making it work. As a means of suggesting a visual continuity, the artists here have in one way or another confronted the notion of transition, or an evolution, within the picture plane or 3-D space. Images that convey the process of realization, the getting from here to there; and for the viewer a chance to go along for the ride.