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Reception: Saturday, February 12, 2-6 pm

LARRY POONS

New Paintings

February 12 – March 12, 2011

Danese and Lori Bookstein Fine Art are pleased to announce a joint exhibition of new paintings by Larry Poons to be held simultaneously at both galleries. The opening receptions will be held on Saturday afternoon, February 12, from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m.

In this recent body of work, Poons embraces the chromatic worlds of music and color, creating a visual and emotional environment ripe with gesture, raw energy and improvisation. *The physical presence of the painter is apparent in each canvas, and not merely in the form of his dynamic gestures. The paintings stand as testimony to a masterful performance, the visual equivalent of a virtuoso musician at the peak of his creative powers.*¹

These paintings, mostly large in scale, consist of skeins of color that bump, loop and slide into one another, inviting the viewer on a circuitous journey of abstract narration. *Larry Poons...has solved "a riddle" that's haunted non-representational work for at least three-quarters of a century. How can a painter compel viewers to spend as much time with art that doesn't tell a story or have a message as with canvases that do?*² Alive with gesture and energy, myriad flourishes interact and resonate with each other. *Poons's style has entered a phase that brings names like the great landscape painters Constable and Cezanne to mind.*³ Cezanne once said, "there is no drawing in painting," and Poons agrees: *"What I've realized is that color is the only element in painting. It's the only element there's ever been."* And in these latest, magisterial paintings the colors are: magenta, gold, royal blue, verdi-gris, carmine, lush green, lemon, ultramarine.... *These meshes of color seem to liquefy and change in the light.*⁴

Traces of remembered landscapes and distant figures surge and then withdraw into *small energetic registers of cascading strokes... that are born of memory—not observation, other than the observation of the events directly taking place on the canvas itself and the artist's experience of his own self-generating process of painting.*⁵ Intensely individual and intimate, each definitive brushstroke becomes a part of the whole – the short and frenetic, the calm and the considered, the bold edge of confidence – an arena of action tamed by the sublime.

Larry Poons was born in 1937 in Tokyo and was raised in New York. In 1955, he attended the New England Conservatory of Music, and two years later transferred to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. He was given his first one-man exhibition in 1963 at Richard Bellamy's famed Green Gallery, and in 1965 his work was included in MoMA's celebrated exhibition *The Responsive Eye*. In 1969, he was the youngest artist featured in curator Henry Geldzahler's landmark exhibition, *New York Painting and Sculpture, 1940-1970*. In 1981, the MFA Boston organized an exhibition of his paintings from the 1970s. The work of Larry Poons is included in major museum and private collections throughout the United States and abroad. He currently lives and works in New York.

¹ Ebony, David. Excerpted from the forthcoming monograph on Larry Poons, *Larry Poons Recent Paintings*. New York: Danese, 2007.

² Tuchman, Phyllis. "Larry Poons: The Joy of Color," in *Larry Poons Recent Paintings*. New York: Danese, 2007.

³ Cooper, John. Excerpted from "Radical Surface: An Interview with New York Artist Larry Poons," *Glass*, Spring 2011.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Pincus-Witten, Robert. *Larry Poons*. New York: Danese, 2009.

The exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue with an essay by John Cooper. For further information, please contact Carol Corey carol@danese.com or Lauren Bakoian lauren@loribooksteinfineart.com.