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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EXHIBITION: Raymond Pettibon --- "Drawings and Wall Drawings"

DATES: Thursday, September 14 - Saturday, October 14, 1995

Gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

On Thursday, September 14, the gallery will open with an exhibition of drawings by Raymond Pettibon. Mr. Pettibon has shown consistently in New York since 1986; however, this will be his first exhibition at David Zwirner. On view in the gallery will be a selection of drawings dating from 1982 to 1995. Furthermore, the artist will execute two large-scale wall drawings specifically for this show.

Raymond Pettibon's drawings, in which he combines picture and text, are striking for their almost incomprehensible depth of ideas, subject matters, associations, and metaphors. Dating back to the late 1970s, Pettibon adapted a drawing style similar to the one found in American comic books. He was interested in the cartoon's mode of presentation, which enabled him to use a more remote, generic drawing style versus a very personal one. He was not interested in the way narrative was treated in comics, namely with a continuous story line. In Pettibon's work, pictures and text are very often not connected in an obvious, logical way. What unifies pictures and text is the precise way in which the text elements are treated formally in the drawings. Especially in Pettibon's later work, where the text tends to be longer, the text part becomes an equal graphic element in the composition, thus creating a sense of urgency on behalf of the viewer, to produce meaning out of contradictory elements.

Pettibon's work is remarkable in the way that it completely erases any boundary between "high" or "low." Pettibon uses his own prose, but also likes to quote both writers, as well as philosophers. He is particularly drawn to the pioneers of modernist stream-of-conscious writing, such as James Joyce, William Faulkner, and Marcel Proust. In Pettibon's work, their prose is likely to show up alongside baseball players, religious motifs, "Gumbys", or surfers. Pettibon ventures through every imaginable cultural level with breathtaking ease. Only close observation of his work will reveal that these drawings are products of highly poetic constructions, rather than of random associations.

As Ulrich Loock, curator at the Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland states in a catalogue that accompanied Pettibon's recent retrospective there:

"What becomes increasingly clear--as in the image of the cloud and the idea of the empty parenthesis--is the search for indefinite expression, for expression prior to the differentiation between meanings. This indeterminate state, which has a significant precedent in the idea of the sublime, is not accessible, however, in a positive form like that given to it by Barnett Newman in his particular historic moment. It is only available as loss, distorted by the manifestations of an apocalyptic culture which leaves the artist no alternative but to travel through all of them."

For further information, please contact the gallery at (212)966-9074.