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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 28, 1997

EXHIBITION: RICHARD JACKSON - "PAINT BALL"

DATES: SEPTEMBER 12 - OCTOBER 18, 1997

Opening on Friday, September 12, the gallery will present an exhibition by the Los Angeles based artist Richard Jackson. This exhibition entitled "Paintball", composed of three large-scale kinetic works, will be the artist's second solo exhibition in New York.

Richard Jackson was born in Sacramento, California in 1939. He started his career in the early 1960's as an abstract painter with an affinity for the California tradition of lyrical abstraction, such as the work of Clyfford Still and Hessel Smith. In 1965 Jackson befriended Bruce Nauman, whose critical reworking of the premises of sculpture during the late 1960's became crucial for the development of Jackson's work, pushing him to a more analytical and conceptual approach to painting. In a radical move Jackson turned away from the central premise of Abstract Expressionist aesthetics; namely the intuitive generation of form through the hand of the artist via a series of painterly acts. He decided instead to completely avoid his own gestural brushwork, eliminating the subjective 'hand' from the creation of the painting.

The conceptual paintings that followed were based on strategies that Jackson shared with the first generation of conceptual artists: to generate a painting, Jackson would formulate a narrative description or a scenario that was to be followed out in order to execute the work. At the same time Jackson was interested in the structuralist concerns of Minimalism, thus emphasizing the physicality of the materials used to make a painting: paint, canvas, stretcher, and of course the architecture in which the painting finds its context.

Jackson's subsequent works from the 1970's are the results and effects of a clear execution of a process. The works were generated on the surface of pre-existing walls, or artist-engineered objects such as a maze of canvas walls. Jackson used stretched canvas as paint applicator to move, smear, or in essence activate the paint; thus inverting the traditional relationship of paintbrush to canvas.

In recent years, Jackson started to use manufactured objects from everyday life, both as generators of paint activity as well as surfaces for the resulting painting. Jackson continues his emphasis on activity rather than on the static art object. His works are in essence performance generated, and can be seen as evidence--or rather left-overs--of a performative event, leaving the viewer to decide how the work is executed.

For this exhibition the artist will show three large kinetic sculptures, two of which generate "paintings", the third which generates "prints". Only one of the three sculptures, the "Paint Ball", is actually active during the exhibition. The "print" capacity of the third sculpture will be shown through two hundred prints made prior to this exhibition. The different levels of activation that distinguish these three sculptures further focus on Richard Jackson's process; a process that Walter Hopps calls an investigation into the "phenomenology of materials". Jackson himself describes his current and past practices more simply: "unusual behaviors".

For further information, please contact the gallery at 212.966.9074