

## DEREK ELLER GALLERY

For Immediate Release:

David Dupuis

*Lost on the Frontiers of Heaven and Hell*

Oct 11 - Nov 17, 2007

Opening Reception: Thursday, Oct 11, 6-8 pm

Derek Eller Gallery is pleased to present *Lost on the Frontiers of Heaven and Hell*, an exhibition of new works on paper by David Dupuis. On view will be several large-scale drawings obsessively rendered in graphite, color pencil, and collage. Dupuis' work has traditionally been concerned with notions of pleasure and mortality. The current work builds upon these themes while attaching them to more specific imagery that underscores the human condition.

This exhibition contains representations of overt sexuality and violence that the artist has culled from magazines and the Internet. Dupuis states, "I wanted to make graphic sexual / homosexual imagery poetic. I wanted to return some meaning and beauty to these images." One example of this can be found in the drawing *Boys on Film*, where the artist presents a tangled web of bodies as vibrant blue flowing forms, the aesthetic of which was inspired by Japanese Edo period fabrics. The subject matter of this work remains ambiguous at first glance. Dupuis creates a subtle visual confusion, allowing the viewer to slowly discover the true subject matter. The work *Spiritualized* epitomizes violence in the form of a ghastly figure rendered in a luscious palette of what Dupuis refers to as "Virgin Mary Blue". Partially inspired by Mexican Retablo and Ex-Voto devotional art, this work is infused with a topical significance as we envision this figure as a symbol of contemporary religious fanaticism, akin to a suicide bomber or terrorist.

Also on view are four large-scale self-portraits, which grew out of an earlier project where the artist produced one self-portrait every day for a year. The work entitled *Lost on the Frontiers of Heaven and Hell* includes an exquisitely rendered graphite self-portrait surrounded by the collaged heads of handsome young men in vivid blue halos. The work is both amusing and poignant, suggesting the anxiety associated with growing older in a youth obsessed culture. Dupuis states, "I certainly feel this more acutely now. I don't think growing older is bad; it's natural. I am no longer the young thoughtless, obedient consumer, and I want this reflected in the self-portrait work." The physical and psychological realism of his self-portraits are directed outward in the drawing *Torn between Jupiter and Apollo*. This work was inspired by a chance happening where the artist dropped a stack of magazines to find one had opened to a picture of John F. Kennedy Jr. opposite a muscle bound model in various stages of undress. Like the other works in this exhibition, this piece exemplifies sex and death, but in another form, merging the beauty of youth with a sense of impending doom as suggested by the ocean backdrop and the prominent wristwatch, symbolic of the relentless forward march of time.

Born in 1959 in Holyoke, Massachusetts, David Dupuis currently lives and works in New York. He has exhibited widely throughout United States and Europe and his work has been collected by numerous museums including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The New Museum of Contemporary Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art. This will be his seventeenth solo exhibition.

Derek Eller Gallery is located at 615 West 27th Street, between 11th and 12th Avenues. Hours are Tuesday - Saturday from 11am - 6pm. For further information or visuals, please contact the gallery at 212.206.6411 or visit [www.derekeller.com](http://www.derekeller.com).

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