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Painting is Not Doomed to Repeat Itself

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Hollis Taggart Galleries is pleased to inaugurate its new Chelsea location with *Painting is Not Doomed to Repeat Itself*, an exhibition celebrating the diversity of contemporary American painting. The fourteen artists represented reimagine what it means to be a painter in the twenty-first century by eschewing art-historically referential styles and content in favor of original and often very personal inspiration. These artists investigate the accoutrement of the street, the landscape of the psyche, their own personal and professional history, and even the act of painting itself in works that reflect the diverse and innovative reality of the contemporary scene.

Sounding the death knell of painting became a critical refrain in the second half of the twentieth century. It was first heard after the *Sturm und Drang* of Abstract Expressionism seemingly flouted centuries of art historical precedent. It resurfaced after many of the successive postmodern movements: the ironic hard edges of pop, the pared-down compositions of Minimalism, the free-for-all expressionism of assemblage and street art, and finally the tongue-in-cheek homages of 1980s appropriation – each caused critics to mourn painting's demise. Even recent scholarship has suggested that painting today survives through the recycling of past styles. As this exhibition illustrates, however, contemporary painters in fact continue to break new aesthetic ground and are not burdened by the weight of painting's history.

Squeak Carnwath, Brenda Goodman, Merlin James, Catherine Murphy, and Phillip Taaffe are joined by a select group of artists who together represent the fantastically heterogeneous state of painting today. They reside mainly outside of the New York art world, in places as far flung as rural southern California, upstate New York, and the United Kingdom. Their methods are also diverse, spanning a wide range of possibilities afforded by mere paint on canvas. Together their work affirms that no single term – no “-ism” – can contain this contemporary moment, but rather that today's art world is defined by multidimensional approaches and fresh perspectives.

Painting is Not Doomed to Repeat Itself is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with an essay by the internationally acclaimed poet and critic John Yau, curator of the exhibition. Some of Yau's most recent publications include *A Thing Among Things: The Art of Jasper Johns* (2008), *Exhibits* (2010), and the book of poetry *Further Adventures in Monochrome* (2012). Yau served as the Arts Editor for the *Brooklyn Rail* from 2007 to 2011 and currently publishes regularly for the Hyperallergic Weekend edition.

Gallery hours are Monday through Friday 10-5 and Saturday 11-5
For more information, please visit our website at www.hollistaggart.com