

Press contact:
Jennifer Rohr
312/642.8877
jrohr@richardgraygallery.com

RICHARD
GRAY
GALLERY

MUSE: EXPLORING INSPIRATION

September 20-December 1, 2012 at Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago

Artist Talk: 2pm Friday September 21, 2012, RSVP to Katlyn Hemmingsen at 312.642.8877 or kh@richardgraygallery.com

Richard Gray Gallery is pleased to announce *Muse: Exploring Inspiration*, an exhibition opening September 20, 2012. An artist talk will be held at the gallery on Friday, September 21 at 2pm featuring conversations with Jan Tichy and Marc Swanson. The public and press are welcome.

The exhibition will feature contemporary and historical artworks from 17 artists spanning the gallery's 50-year history, commencing with an exceptionally rare wood sculpture by Alexander Calder dating from the early 1940s and ending in 2012 with a large-scale painting by Rashid Johnson. *Muse* will also include work from Magdalena Abakanowicz, Alberto Giacometti, Ewan Gibbs, David Hockney, Alex Katz, David Klamen, Willem de Kooning, Roy Lichtenstein, Jaume Plensa, Robert Rauschenberg, Mark Rothko, John Stezaker, Marc Swanson, Jan Tichy and Andy Warhol.

Muse: Exploring Inspiration concentrates on the ideas surrounding the origins of inspiration. Specifically focusing on the role of the muse, this exhibition also explores how artists perceive their muses as a facet of their creative process and how that relationship can be incorporated into the artwork itself.

Throughout the exhibition, the muse takes on a myriad of forms. For Jan Tichy, an artist working at the intersection of video, sculpture, and architecture, the muse for site-specific *Installation No. 8 (Hancock)* is the very architecture of the building in which it is installed--the John Hancock Center where Richard Gray Gallery exhibits on the 25th floor. The building's famous X-shaped beam is employed as a sculptural element amidst a meditative light and video projection. For Marc Swanson, it is the materials themselves that inspire and form his work. *Untitled (Black Fabric & Wreath)* embodies the idea of alchemy with objects of inspiration as Swanson transforms silk flowers and inexpensive fabric into a freestanding sculpture. The flowers are painted and woven together in a wreath and the black fabric covered in a metallic silver paint as the artist forever memorizes and transforms the humble materials.

In 2013, Richard Gray Gallery will celebrate its 50th anniversary year with the publishing of a critical catalogue, taking the exhibition *Muse: Exploring Inspiration* as its point of departure. The publication will incorporate both dialogues and works of art from some of the artists and collectors with whom we have had the pleasure of working over the past 50 years and whose works and collections have in turn come to shape the gallery.