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STEPHEN TALASNIK

Anatomy of Architecture: Drawings and Sculpture

March 13 - April 12, 2008

New York, NY (February 12, 2008) -The Directors of Marlborough Chelsea are pleased to announce that an exhibition of recent work by Stephen Talasnik will be held from Thursday, March 13 to Saturday, April 12, 2008. The exhibition will run concurrently with an exhibition of work by George Rickey at 545 West 25th Street. This will be Talasnik's second solo exhibition with Marlborough and his first in the recently reopened Marlborough Chelsea gallery.

Anatomy of Architecture will consist of approximately thirty-five drawings and a dozen sculptures. The works will range from intimate six-inch sculptures and sixteen-inch drawings to four-foot sculptures and six-foot wide drawings. Talasnik's distinctive architecturally inspired forms are rendered in drawings that employ graphite, liquid graphite, ink, and collage and in sculptures that explore forms in wood, acrylic resin, and bronze. The drawings are grouped into five series of works: the four-foot wide panoramic *Diagrams*; the architecturally complex, forty-inch tall *Anatomical Series*; the dense and tightly-contained thirty-inch tall *Cross Section Series*; the more ephemeral and lighter twenty-one inch tall *Ireland Series*; and the small and darkly enigmatic *Transmission Series*. In contrast, the sculptures draw inspiration from the drawings but also exist quite independently from the two-dimensional work.

Stephen Talasnik began his education in art in Philadelphia and developed an early interest in rendering architecture and engineering, inspired by the industrial and commercial structures from his environment. As Hilarie Sheets wrote in a recent review in ARTnews, Talasnik "translated a boyhood fascination with bridges, tunnels, stadiums, and other feats of engineering into abstracted structures that tower, swoop, and pivot within their fictive space" (November 2006). Talasnik also draws from a deep well of past drawing masters. These include the drawings of the 15th century Italian masters Leonardo da Vinci and Paolo Uccello, the fantastic 18th century inventions of Giovanni Battista Piranesi, the utopian visions of the early 20th century Russian Constructivists, and the architectural drawings of Hugh Ferriss.

Talasnik's approach to these fictive architectural images, however, is thoroughly modern, even post-modern, in the way that he constructs his works from the inside out. The structures are dissected, splayed, and playfully exposed into unbuildable and unlivable spaces. Thus, we are presented with the Anatomy of Architecture. This dichotomy between idealistic architectural rendering and a showman's ability to reveal and obscure is summed up by Sheets' reflection that the work, "brought to mind both the utopian yearnings of the Russian Constructivists and movies of children at an amusement park."

The physical means of achieving these impossible forms began with a process of applying and erasing graphite in numerous passes, creating ghostly palimpsests that seemed to resolve and dissolve in quick succession. This led to the additional use of liquid graphite and collage and to an increasingly aggressive and skillful manipulation of these media. The marks are altered using traditional sanding, smudging and embossing tools as well as a wide array of esoteric devices and machines some of whose signatures are evident and some of which are wonderfully enigmatic.

The result is that one sees the fantastic structures themselves but also cannot help but be intrigued by the methods of achieving those forms. As the noted critic and author Nina Rappaport recently wrote, "Stephen Talasnik's drawings engage the viewer through their depth of process and subject, their depth of imaginary structures and materiality both physically and intellectually. By transforming potential voids to solids the architectural forms shift and mystify but with a real presence."

Talasnik studied fine art at both the Rhode Island School of Design and the Tyler School of Art. One year of his graduate study was spent at Tyler's program in Rome, where he was introduced to the works of Piranesi, Leonardo and Uccello, all of whom continue to influence his work. In the late 1980s he lived in Tokyo where his drawings were based on the futuristic architecture of that city. Currently living and working in New York City, Talasnik's drawings and sculpture have been acquired by numerous major international collections such as the Albertina in Vienna, the British Museum, London; Detroit Institute of Art, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. His work may also be seen in upcoming exhibitions in 2008 at the Salon du Dessin Contemporain and the Gallery Bailly in Paris, the Japan Society and The Queens Museum in New York, and the Ohio University Art Gallery in Athens, Ohio.

An illustrated color catalogue of the show with an essay by critic and author Nina Rappaport will be available at the time of the exhibition.

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