

David Zwirner
43 Greene Street
New York NY 10013
Tel: 212/966-9074 Fax: 212/966-4952

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STAN DOUGLAS: "HORS-CHAMPS"; A VIDEO INSTALLATION

DATES: March 19 - April 24

Gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday 10.00 AM to 6.00 PM

Opening on March 19, 1993 the gallery will show a video installation by Canadian artist STAN DOUGLAS. In his first one-man exhibition in the United States the artist will show his 1992 work entitled "Hors-Champs". The piece was produced by the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris and was first shown at last year's "DOCUMENTA IX" in Kassel, Germany.

"Hors-Champs", a video filmed "live" by STAN DOUGLAS and one other camera man, records the performance of four American musicians playing a Free Jazz composition. "Free Jazz", an idiom of African-American music which became prominent in the late 1960's and early 70's, is characterized by group improvisation and harmonic freedom. By choosing four American musicians (George Lewis - trombone; Douglas Ewart - saxophone; Kent Carter - bass, and Oliver Johnson - drums) who either lived in France during the Free Jazz moment or who still reside there today STAN DOUGLAS points to the continuous presence of African-American music in Europe, starting with Josephine Baker and Sidney Bechet and continuing to the present. The performance itself confronts us with a microcosm of black music, as it brings together the traditions of Call and Response, Blues, Gospel and Jazz in a "Free" setting. In its complexity the music reminds us of a significant African-American cultural achievement.

In the gallery installation two projections are simultaneously presented on the front and back of a large scale suspended screen. While one side shows the edited version of this two-camera production, the other side presents a simultaneous counter-narrative of all that has been edited out. Filmed in black and white against a seamless studio backdrop in the style of French musical television productions from the mid-1960's, "Hors-Champs" is on the one hand nostalgic in the way it pays homage to a powerful but yet obscure art form, while on the other it is vibrant as it stretches the limits of what we expect to see in an art gallery. The strict and haunting formal quality of this video installation amplifies the many metaphoric levels of "Hors-Champs".

The piece will be included in STAN DOUGLAS's upcoming one-man exhibition at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris scheduled for the fall of 1993.