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EXHIBITION: Francis Picabia, Luc Tuymans – Paintings

DATES: May 3 through June 17, 1995

Opening on Wednesday, May 3, 1995, the gallery will feature a two-person exhibition of paintings by Francis Picabia and Luc Tuymans.

Luc Tuymans who had his first one-person exhibition in the United States last fall here in the gallery, lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium. Francis Picabia was born in 1879 in Paris to parents of Spanish descent and died in France in 1953. His work has been widely exhibited throughout the world.

Francis Picabia is undoubtedly one of the most important painters of this century, however there is an odd discrepancy in the reception of the early vs. his later work. The early work is prominently on display in many museum collections. The later work is suspiciously absent and there seems to be confusion among the scholars about its intrinsic value-- its importance within Picabia's oeuvre. This show will feature five works which Picabia executed in the last decade of his life.

Picabia has always been a true artist's artist. His decision to abandon a signature style in order to embrace various stylistic strategies in his paintings, makes him an increasingly relevant artist for much of the art that is being produced today. Not only have contemporary painters such as Sigmar Polke and David Salle embraced the work of Picabia, many younger artists are drawn to Picabia's stylistic idiosyncrasies, especially those of his later years. The subversive qualities of his images and the strange psychology of the paintings make the connection to the work of Luc Tuymans.

Both artists position their work on the periphery of painting. They abandon the heroic gesture, the signature brush stroke for a more distant method of painting whose psychological intensity is both puzzling and seductive at the same time. They freely cross the lines between abstract and representational painting. Although both artists' works are highly ideological, a precise reading is made impossible by the evasive quality of the work. Both painters concern themselves with the limitations inherent in the medium of painting, without resorting to cynicism nor a heavy-handed didactic critique. Some of these works can be seen as "anti-painting".