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EXHIBITION: **Marcel Dzama: *The Course of Human History Personified***

DATES: **September 8 – October 8, 2005**
Reception: Thursday, September 8, 2005, 6 to 8 PM

Opening on September 8, 2005, David Zwirner is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Marcel Dzama. Born in 1974 in Winnipeg, Canada, Dzama has had numerous solo and group exhibitions in the United States, Canada and abroad. He was also a member of the Winnipeg-based artists' collective *The Royal Art Lodge*. This will be the artist's fourth solo exhibition at the gallery, and will include single drawings, composite drawings, costumes, notebook pages, and sculptures.

Known for his figurative compositions of pen and watercolor on manila-colored paper with a characteristic palette of muted browns, grays, greens, yellows, and reds, Dzama's drawings are populated by human characters, animals, hybrids—sometimes combined with text—that are placed against empty backgrounds. Caught in unlikely situations, his characters and their environments are stripped of specific narrative contexts, thus offering many possible interpretations. The artist's cast of characters is expansive and characters often reappear, though in each drawing their roles become more complex and defined. The work draws from a variety of sources, among them native mythology, Inuit art, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, medieval paintings, and American folklore. Dzama is influenced by the work of William Blake, Francisco de Goya, Sandro Botticelli, and James Ensor, among others.

The title for the present show, "The Course of Human History Personified," is borrowed from Dante and recalls both grandiose artistic and literary cycles from the nineteenth century such as the New York Hudson River School artist Thomas Cole's five-painting *The Course of Empire* of 1836, where nature plays as large a role as humans. In Dzama's art, personification has always been the main leitmotif—imagined characters and trees and beasts assume base human characteristics. (Rosenfeld, Jason. From "Viewing Human History Through a Unique Lens," 2005)

Works on paper in the exhibition include individual drawings and composite drawings—the latter made from more than one sheet of paper on which the drawing connects. Also on view will be one of the artist's notebooks, which shows how many of the characters evolve. Three-dimensional works in the show include costumes and a new body of resin sculptures, both of which bring the artist's drawings to a larger-than-life-sized scale.

An illustrated catalogue is available.

For information, please contact the gallery at 212-727-2070, or visit www.davidzwirner.com