

Alexander and Bonin

EXHIBITION: Paul Thek – Paintings of the 1980's
DATES: Saturday, January 25 – Saturday, February 22, 2003
LOCATION: 132 Tenth Avenue between 18th and 19th
HOURS: Tuesday-Saturday 10am –6pm

Opening on January 25th, Alexander and Bonin will exhibit paintings made during the 1980's by Paul Thek (1933-1988). This will be the first exhibition devoted exclusively to this body of work and many of these paintings are being exhibited for the first time. Primarily known as a maker of sculpture (the wax *Technological Reliquaries* of the mid-1960s and the bronze *Pied Piper* works of the mid-1970s) and installations (from 1967-1986), Thek began and ended his career as a painter.

The paintings from the 1980's are very open, painted in a seemingly casual manner. Closer inspection reveals the sophistication of an artist whose lifelong career of working in various materials has led him to these large and bright colored paintings. There is a range of imagery from recognizable 'bunny rabbits' to the enigmatically abstract. Several smaller paintings include words or phrases. As a body of work, these paintings are perhaps closest to Thek's sketchbooks which are characterized by an unedited combination of thoughts and quotes, executed in styles ranging from the refined to the garrulous. A group of 28 etchings printed from copper plates made by Thek in 1975 will also be on view.

The exhibition of *A document...*, a 1969 collaboration by Paul Thek and Edwin Klein at the Janos Gat Gallery (1100 Madison; 212/327-0441) has been extended to run concurrently with this painting exhibition.

Paul Thek was born in Brooklyn in 1933. He studied at the Art Students League and Pratt Institute in the early 1950's. Thek exhibited his work in New York at Stable and Pace Galleries during the 1960's and spent much of the 1970's in Europe making room size installations constructed from transitory materials such as sand, newspaper and trees. There have been two surveys of his work - *Processions* at the ICA, Philadelphia in 1977 and *The wonderful world that almost was*, a 1995 exhibition organized by Witte de With, Rotterdam which traveled to Barcelona, Berlin, Marseilles and Zürich. Thek's drawings, paintings and sculpture are included in numerous American and European permanent museum collections.