

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Opening Reception: Friday, April 30 6-8 PM

Performance: Thursday, May 20 7PM

Nicole Klagsbrun



JOHN GIORNO

BLACK PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS

APRIL 30—JUNE 12, 2010

Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery is pleased to present *Black Paintings and Drawings*, an exhibition by John Giorno running from April 30 to June 12, 2010 with an opening reception Friday, April 30, from 6 -8 p.m. On Thursday, May 20 at 7pm Giorno will perform “*Lorca, please help me!*” and other poems at the gallery.

For his first one-person show in New York, John Giorno will exhibit paintings and drawings that reveal the evolution of the poem painting. Filling the walls of the gallery are twelve stenciled poems; over these hang black paintings at close proximity. The installation echoes the artist’s statement in a recent *Artforum* interview: “From emptiness, form arises.” Giorno’s poem paintings serve as one more aspect of his role as a poet and artist—connecting words and images in unexpected yet elegant ways. A video of Giorno performing the poem *THANX 4 NOTHING* will be on display in the gallery’s project room.

The *Black Paintings and Drawings* represent the visual aspect of John Giorno’s commitment to confronting audiences with poetry in different contexts—inviting us to rethink how we perceive words and images. As with many downtown artists in the 1960s rebelling against Abstract Impressionism and inspired by Duchamp, Giorno sought alternative ways of writing and presenting his poetry: using the telephone (Dial-A-Poem), recordings (Giorno Poetry Systems) and multiples (poem prints). As he said in an interview with Hans Ulrich Obrist, given the influence of Warhol, Rauschenberg and Johns, he began to see “the possibilities of found images through words. The way I found and used the material, . . . became a poetic form.” The first *Poem Prints* were part of a Dial-A-Poem installation in the 1970 exhibition *Information* at the Museum of Modern Art.

John Giorno was born in 1936 in Brooklyn and grew up in Roslyn Heights, New York. He studied literature and art at Columbia College (1958) and moved to the Bowery in the early 1960s, where he became part of the experimental downtown arts scene. He famously was the subject of Andy Warhol’s first film, *Sleep*. He is the author of several poetry collections including the well-received *Subduing Demons in America: Selected Poems, 1962-2007*. Recently he co-curated *Rip It Up and Start Again* at Artists Space. Giorno’s solo exhibitions include *LIFE IS A KILLER*, Galerie Almine Rech, Paris and *THANX FOR NOTHING*, Galerie Jordan Seydoux, Berlin (both, 2009), Galerie d’Arte Contemporaine, Hotel de Ville, Besancon, France (2007) and *Poem Etchings / Poem Prints / Poem Paintings*, Galerie du Jour Agnès B, Paris (2005). Group exhibitions include *modern modern*, Chelsea Art Museum, NY (2009); *Traces du sacré*, Centre Pompidou (2008); *Printed in France*, Galerie Jordan Seydoux, Berlin, (2008); *Welcoming the Flowers*, Senior & Shopmaker Gallery, New York, (2007); *Renegades: 25 Years of Performance Art*, Exit Art, New York, (2006); and *Multiple Strategies*, Contemporary Art Center, Cincinnati, (2004).

Exhibition graphic design: Mark Michaelson