

# GAGOSIAN GALLERY

February 4, 2003

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **GAGOSIAN GALLERY**

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Tue – Sat 10:00am– 6:00pm

## **RICHARD ARTSCHWAGER**

Saturday, 25 February – Saturday, 12 April 2003

Opening reception: Tuesday, 25 February, 6 – 8pm

Richard Artschwager (b.1923) has been making art – sculpture, painting, drawings and other objects – since the early 1950s. His most recent work, shown for the first time in this exhibition, marks a departure, in that the images he has composed from sources in popular culture have overt, if deadpan, allusions to current political issues. Some of his recent paintings, in acrylic on Celotex, a roughly-textured synthetic surface, of *George W. Bush, Trent* or *Elective Affinities*, include images of the Taliban in Afghanistan, and refer to recent political events, foreign policy and the history of race in America. These issues are filtered through photographic and other sources so that the figures and scenes depicted appear to be a dreamlike charade, reflected in the mirrored frames which are an integral aspect of the work.

Richard Artschwager has said of these extraordinary new paintings:

“Portraits are for me a vehicle for ravaging ambition.  
Photos give you a stupid, unassailable truth,  
Drawings give you touch,  
Painting gives you physical/mental invasion.  
I want it all.”

Artschwager has exhibited internationally since the 1960s, and last year held his first public exhibition in London at the Serpentine Gallery. A survey of drawings and graphic works will be held at the Kunstmuseum Winterthur in March 2003. In 1979, he wrote his “Autochronology” starting: “Painting, a residue from other times, broke the surface (1962) as grisaille works made by grid-enlarging photographs...” Later he added two further statements: “Since the above was written, I have had many other things happen to me, hardly any of which I can understand” (1994), and “There has been some progress. By this time, as of 2000 – give or take – I can confidently claim to have total insight into every aspect of my life” (2001).

An illustrated catalogue, with text by the art historian Michael Lobel will be published.

For further information please contact the gallery.