

# GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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## PRESS RELEASE

### **GAGOSIAN GALLERY**

6-24 BRITANNIA STREET  
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GALLERY HOURS:

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Tue – Sat: 10:00am– 6:00pm

## **CY TWOMBLY: *The Rose***

**Thursday, 12 February – Saturday, 9 May 2009**

**Opening reception for the artist: Thursday, February 12th from 6 to 8pm**

Gagosian Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of five new monumental paintings by Cy Twombly.

Each painting comprises four wood panels on which three roses in full bloom are depicted in pulsating colours, ranging from deepest burgundy to tangerine, gold, violet and crimson, set against a background of vibrant turquoise. Inscribed on the last panel of each painting are fragments from Rilke's poem cycle "The Roses." Stanzas scrawled in a gestural mode reflect Twombly's characteristic conflation of painting and poetry, image and word, while his brushwork describes petals bursting open, together with words that hint and evoke. He allows the paint to flow down the panels so that liquidity and gravity interact, asserting the vertical passage of the medium over the broad horizontality of the support.

Some aspects of Twombly's new works recall his earlier cycle of paintings, *Analysis of the Rose as Sentimental Despair* (1985), now in The Menil Collection, Houston, which also referred to quotations by Rilke, as well as Rumi and Giacomo Leopardi, embracing conceptions of nature dominated by its inevitable demise. Twombly's ardent, bold, and often flamboyant use of colour has other affinities -- with Warhol's *Flower* series, for example, or Matisse's late paper cut-outs. But just as the rose recurs throughout Rilke's work as a *memento mori*, so does Twombly employ the motifs and conditions of the natural world to allude to the pleasure and transience of life.

Cy Twombly was born in 1928 in Lexington, VA. He has exhibited his work extensively since the mid 1960s and it is collected by public and private institutions the world over. Major recent exhibitions include a retrospective at Tate Modern, a variant of which is currently on view at the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, and will travel to the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome later this year. Another survey of recent work will inaugurate the new building of The Art Institute of Chicago in May 2009. Twombly lives and works in Gaeta, Italy and Lexington, VA.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with an essay by Jonathan Jones.

For more information, please contact the gallery at +44.20.7841.9960 or london@gagosian.com.