

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Drawing Room in East Hampton is pleased to present *Chris Doyle: Dream of Arcadia*, an exhibition of the artist's new watercolors and animation, on view September 18 through October 25, 2004. The show features the most recent merging of two longstanding aspects of Doyle's work, watercolor and video, in a monumental watercolor and related animation derived from it, along with a selection of twenty new watercolors from his ongoing *Untitled House Series*.

As Linda Yablonsky notes in *What's So Funny About Contemporary Art*, this month's *ARTnews* cover story: "For Chris Doyle, a Brooklyn artist who channels complex emotions through deadpan humor, laughter is often the best revenge." Doyle adds, "If you can't find tremendous humor in the everyday, the sadness becomes overwhelming."

At the invitation of The Drawing Room, Doyle visited the East End this spring to gather raw material for the development of *Extraordinary Perceptual Dilemmas and the Madness of Climbing*, a watercolor measuring 46 x 78 inches. In this ambitious watercolor Doyle creates a twenty-first century allegorical landscape with a twist, borrowing from the Hudson River School painter Thomas Cole, whose 1838 painting *Dream of Arcadia* inspired the title for the current show. The imagery for *Extraordinary Perceptual Dilemmas* includes an array of twentieth-century residential architecture, both observed and invented crowded into a hilly landscape with allusions to imperial ascension and decadence in statuary, triumphal arches and red, white and blue bunting. A sculptural group in the foreground appears to look back at their empire with pride, while a decaying tree hints that unraveling is to come.

In the companion video presented on a flat screen monitor, Doyle uses animation and sound effects to heighten the psychological state presented in his watercolor, weaving traffic in motion and other amusing surprises through his painted backdrop, rendering a formerly idyllic landscape overcrowded by civilization. Through his choice of cinematic proportions for the watercolor, Doyle emphasizes the implicit parallel between his contemporary process and the techniques used in Hollywood classics, where matte paintings formed the backgrounds for scenes shot in the studio.

The *Untitled House Series* is a separate body of work that Doyle began in 1999, sparked by his desire to investigate and recreate memories of the homes he inhabited over the course of more than seven childhood moves. These 9 x 9 inch watercolors present tiny renderings of suburban homes eccentrically placed to activate their dominant white backgrounds. In this series that Doyle returns to periodically, particularly when travel allows him to add new material to the collection of houses he has culled from his own photographs and real estate brochures, he transforms modest suburban homes into jewels imbued with dignity and sometimes humor. Viewers inevitably experience an empathic response to these domestic settings, in part a result of his masterful rendering – informed by his training at Harvard University where he was awarded a masters degree in architecture in 1985.

Doyle has received recognition for numerous public art projects, among them *Motor Home* at The Queens Museum of Art; *LEAP* at 2 Columbus Circle; *Commutable* at the Williamsburg Bridge; *Flock* at the Socrates Sculpture Park; and *What I See When I Look At You* at The University of Michigan Museum of Art. In October 2004 *We Will Again Be Optimists*, a five channel video projection, will be presented at 48 Wall Street in New York. His installations and video works have been exhibited at The Brooklyn Museum, PS1 Contemporary Art Center, New Museum of Contemporary Art, Exit Art, Sculpture Center and at galleries in the United States and Europe. He has been awarded grants from New York Council for the Arts, New York Foundation for the Arts, Creative Capital Foundation, Percent for Art, and the Public Art Fund.

For further information or reproductions, please contact Susan Papa at 631.324.5016 or info@drawingroom-gallery.com.