

PRESS RELEASE

PETER CAIN

More Courage and Less Oil

October 5th through November 23rd, 2002
Opening: October 4th from 6:00-8:00 P.M.

Matthew Marks is pleased to announce **Peter Cain: More Courage and Less Oil**, one of two exhibitions in his gallery at 522 West 22nd Street.

This is the first solo exhibition of Cain's work since his untimely death in 1997. The exhibition will include fourteen paintings made between 1988 and 1995.

The title of the show is taken from a note found after Cain's death tacked to his studio wall. The exhibition consists of a selection of Cain's car paintings, which comprise the majority of his small oeuvre. These paintings are formal hybrids in which the sleek lines of luxury cars have been truncated to form new, impossible vehicles. He produced these pictures by cropping car advertisements, piecing together a collage of forms to create sexy yet disturbing mutations of the original automobile.

Cain's work occupies a unique space within his generation of artists. Heralded by curator Elizabeth Sussman as a re-inventor of realist painting, Cain began painting alongside such contemporaries as Elizabeth Peyton, John Currin, and Peter Doig. However, the cerebral hemorrhage that took the artist's life at age 37 cut short his promising career: after only a decade of painting, Cain left behind a total of just over 60 canvases. Brought together from both public and private collections, the pictures included in this exhibition exemplify what Sussman described as Cain's ability "to completely electrify the ordinary and turn the familiar into something totally surreal and post-apocalyptic."

Along similar lines, artist Carroll Dunham has written, "In a relatively brief period, on a steep learning curve, Peter took an idea of questionable promise and drove it hard. From a self-aware variant of illustration close to the wry and bright observations of Ed Ruscha, but with a formalist punch line, the paintings grew to something more tragic and disturbing, coming closer in spirit to the work of someone like Mark Rothko: grand and terrible, yet summoned out of the mundane. Peter went from clever to deep."

Peter Cain was born in Orange, New Jersey, in 1959. Educated at the Parsons School of Design and then the School of Visual Arts, both in New York, Cain first exhibited his work in 1989. His work was included in several prominent group exhibitions, including the 1993 and 1995 Biennial Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

The exhibition will be accompanied by the first monograph on Peter Cain's work. The publication will illustrate the artist's working process, moving from initial collage to basic and then more complex drawings to the final large-scale canvas. The book also includes essays by Carroll Dunham and critic Bob Nickas.

Peter Cain: More Courage and Less Oil will be on view at the Matthew Marks Gallery, 522 West 22nd Street (between 10th and 11th Avenues), through November 23rd, 2002. Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

For further information or photographs please contact Adrian Rosenfeld at 212-243-0200.