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**BILL BURNS: *Dogs and Boats and Airplanes***

**November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 – January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

**Artist talk and closing reception Friday January 23<sup>rd</sup> 6-9pm.**

A.M. Richard Fine Art is pleased to announce, DOGS AND BOATS AND AIRPLANES, an exhibition of works of art by conceptual artist BILL BURNS.

Through numerous travels beginning in 2000, the artist has been documenting -snapshot style- dogs, boats and airplanes. Concurrently, the artist has been compulsively collecting tea towels, salt and pepper shakers in the form of dogs, boats and airplanes. To this accumulation, the artist has contributed a series of watercolors, each distinguished by rather curious poetic captions. Were it not for the knowledge that Mr. Burns is well versed in participatory gestures, the concept of the exhibition may seem perplexing at first. For the last three months- several parcels have been sent to the gallerist with strict instructions: "do not open". In a modern twist on the tradition of folk literature, a tall tale letter campaign was initiated with unsuspecting urban functionaries: a 34<sup>th</sup> district council member, a New York City clerk, a Purina Pet Care customer representative. Interpreted as a continuum of Dadaism, the key to the exhibition may lie in its absurdist premises.

Utilitarian objects, not intended to be perceived as art, are stripped of their domestic identity and placed in a novel situation. The same can be said of the interaction with the city office workers. They are being disrupted from their routine line of work. In responding to the artist' letters they unwittingly engage in an artistic process and are forced to act out of ordinary context. Each stage of the exhibition involves movement, travel and/or action. Simultaneously, a narrative is being weaved on various planes. The story begins with the spontaneous character of the photographic snapshot. It's punctuated with the displacement of objects and threads on with the interruptive nature of the artist's communication with selected individuals. The culmination of the various agitations leads to a peaceful occupation: the contemplation of the works on exhibit.

If Dada sprang from the results of the disasters of war and was experienced through public gatherings, demonstrations, and art publications, then Mr. Burns has successfully re-interpreted this tradition.

In lieu of a manifesto, an illustrated booklet accompanies the exhibition.

Mr. Burns will discuss his work on Friday October 24<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am at the Contemporary Artists' Book Conference to be held at MoMA (The Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2 located at 11 West 53<sup>rd</sup> street). Tickets \$10; members \$8; students \$5. For a complete schedule please visit: [www.arlisny.org/cabc](http://www.arlisny.org/cabc)

Burns, a native of Regina (Saskatchewan), is the recipient of numerous awards: namely, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Government of France.

His work has been exhibited internationally. The artist's most recent solo projects have been shown at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (London) and the KW Institute for Contemporary Art (Berlin.)

Mr. Burns attended Goldsmith College at the University of London and is a professor at York University, Toronto, Ont.

Mr. Burns is the author of numerous conceptual art works and related limited edition publications i.e. *Analgesia* (1993), *How to Help Animals Escape from Degraded Habitats* (1996), *When Pain Strikes* (1999), *Everything I Could Buy on Ebay about Malaria* (2002) *Safety Gear for Small Animals* (2005), *Boiler Suits for Primates* (2004), *Bird Radio* (2007), *The Flora and Fauna Information Service* (2007)). His books, multiples and photographs are included in several collections including the Tate Britain (London), the Victoria & Albert Museum (London), the Museum of Modern Art (New York), The Art Institute of Chicago (IL) and the Getty Center (Los Angeles, CA).

This is Mr. Burns' first solo exhibition at the A.M. Richard gallery.

Please join us for the artist's reception on Friday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, from 6-9pm.

A limited edition full color postcard booklet accompanies the exhibition (published by MKG 127, in an edition of 69).

The gallery is open weekdays by appointment and Friday through Sunday, 1-6 pm.

