

VAN DE WEGHE FINE ART

## RENÉ MAGRITTE PAINTINGS

**November 2 – November 22, 2006**

*Everything we see hides another thing. We always want to see what is hidden by what we see.*

*-René Magritte*

Van de Weghe Fine Art is pleased to present a special exhibition of works by the Belgian surrealist René Magritte during the month of November. The exhibition will focus on paintings and include works from throughout the artist's career, from the late 1920's through the mid-1960s.

Born in 1898, Magritte began taking art lessons as an adolescent and went on to develop great facility as a painter at the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Brussels. He lived in Paris from 1927 – 1930, where he met a number of well-known Dada and Surrealist artists. Magritte began playing with meaning as it is generated by icon, index and symbol in the late 1920s. His seminal work, *The Treachery of Images* (*La trahison des images*) – a picture of a pipe with the assertion “This is not a pipe” written below as a caption – dates from 1929. What at first appears a paradox or contradiction reveals a different truth, a logic of the absurd.

The works the gallery will have on view are equally enigmatic. A masterpiece from 1928, for example, entitled *The Charms of Landscape* (*Les charmes du paysage*) depicts an empty picture frame and a rifle. In *The Labors of Alexander* (*Les travaux d'Alexandre*), a tree stump takes an up an axe by its roots. Is it taking revenge? Or has it chopped itself down? One of Magritte's most classic images -- the iconic man in a bowler hat -- is separated into it's component parts – hat, head and body – in the obliquely titled *The Pilgrim* (*Le Pèlerin*).

“I don't paint visions,” wrote Magritte, “To the best of my ability, by painterly means, I describe objects -- and the mutual relationships of objects -- in such a way that none of our habitual concepts or feelings is necessarily linked with them.” Painted with technical perfection, with the detail of *trompe l'oeil*, the paintings are nonetheless insoluble puzzles. Their strength is their subtle discord, showing us that there is mystery and poetry to be found in the familiar, that everyday life can be an ‘enchanted domain.’

As the Los Angeles County Museum's Exhibition *Magritte and Contemporary Art: The Treachery of Images* explores later in the month of November, Magritte's semiotics have been among the Surrealists' most significant and lasting contributions to contemporary art. His translation of the language of pictorial representation continues to fascinate.

Gallery hours are Tuesday – Saturday, 10:00 am to 6:00 pm, and by appointment.

For further information, please contact the gallery.

521 WEST 23RD STREET NEW YORK NY 10011 TELEPHONE 212-929-6633

FAX 212-929-6632 INFO@VDWFINEART.COM WWW.VDWFINEART.COM