

March 22, 2009

PRESS RELEASE

FRANCIS X. PAVY

Exhibition Dates: April 4 – 25, 2009
Opening Reception: Saturday, April 4th, 6 – 8 pm
Location: Arthur Roger 434, 434 Julia Street, New Orleans, LA 70130
Gallery Hours: Monday - Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm
Contact Info: 504.522.1999. www.arthurrogergallery.com

Arthur Roger Gallery is pleased to present a major exhibition of recent paintings by Louisiana artist Francis X. Pavy. The exhibition will be on view from April 4th – 25th at the Arthur Roger Gallery at 432 Julia St. Mr. Pavy will be in attendance at the opening reception for the exhibition on Saturday, April 4th from 6 to 8 pm. A walkthrough with the artist is scheduled for 2 p.m. prior to the opening reception.

In Francis Pavy's paintings his deeply personal, heavily Cajun influenced iconography merges with universal themes through vibrant color and detailed imagery. One of the major works in the exhibition is *Art Opening*. This captivating sweeping painting is saturated with identifiable patrons, dealers, friends and artwork from the artist's past exhibition openings. *Art Opening* has spawned at least three other recent series of paintings included in this exhibition.

Pavy's "Bluebird" series is inspired by his "vision" after Hurricane Katrina of a clear image of a bluebird singing amidst a bunch of briars. Having just returned to his studio, Francis Pavy interpreted this vision to mean his creative "voice" was still alive, and he went on to create the brilliantly colored evocative "Bluebird" paintings. In the ambitious "Genesis" series the central painting is Atom, Adam, and Eve. In this work Francis Pavy conveys the idea that potential for change exists within us. The "Genesis" series is also comprised of three related pairs of paintings that have multiple themes.

First, *Pommpatus of Love* is paired in the exhibition with *Water Water Everywhere*. These two paintings contain many references to earlier familiar work by Pavy, but here the concern is with the struggle of man against nature and the ultimate domination of nature over man. The title, *Pommpatus of Love*, is taken from a line in a famous Steve Miller song "The Joker." The artist also makes reference to "pomme," the French word for apple. Illustrating man's attempted dominance over nature, *Pommpatus of Love* has Blind John Davis singing of the tale we are witnessing. The dominant image in the painting is of Eve surrounded by the fire of desire. Under a full Scorpionic moon Eve gently strokes with her breath the cool tempting flame on the immortal golden apple. Eve is directing the flame towards Adam, the central figure in the paired *Water Water Everywhere* painting. *Water Water Everywhere* provides a continuation of Pavy's fascination with the representation of water, which for the artist represents the overwhelming power of nature. In this painting the water swamps Adam, a diminutive guitar player unable to reach his lover and singing the blues.

The artist's *Cat Lady with the Diamond Ring* and *Flatheads and Diamonds* are also paired works. The original inspiration for both paintings came from an elderly woman who is the artist's neighbor. The "Cat Lady" neighbor lives alone and depends on the artist for help. This neighbor is completely devoted to her cats but Francis Pavy conjectures from the years he has known her that that she has had a very full life. *Cat Lady and the Diamond Ring* is a painting of a female dancer framed by a large bottle containing smaller bottles each with the silhouette of a man. The dice, car imagery, musical instruments and food all reference the cat lady's lover who is a musician. Other imagery in the painting refers to the Cat Lady's childhood home, Bayou Chene, the narrow Catholicism of her early life, and her abiding preoccupation with her cats. The paired work, *Flathead*

and Diamonds, harkens to the artist's much earlier painting, *Bass Player*. The central figure, the Cat Lady's musician lover, plays the bass surrounded by important elements from his life: gambling, drag racing cars, and the diamond ring he longed to give his girlfriend.

Diamonds in the Sky and *Black Snake Blues with Cajun Kings* constitute a third pair of works. These two paintings relate back to the "Genesis" series but also to the artist's ongoing interest in Cajun Kings and Queens. For years Pavy has noted the proliferation in Cajun country of both Mardi Gras kings and queens and also crassly commercial kings and queens. There are "Kings" of Mardi Gras and Zydeco but also of seafood and mobile homes. Similarly, "Queens" of both Mardi Gras and countless local festivals abound. Floating in *Diamonds in the Sky* are the golden outlines of the artist's two daughters and five festival queens. Each of the paintings in the exhibition sustain the narrative quality that characterizes Pavy's work. The paintings are filled with vibrant color and intricately detailed imagery.

Pavy was born on Mardi Gras Day in Lafayette, Louisiana. He received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from what was then The University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette. This exhibition is the artist's first exhibition since 2006 when he took a personal hiatus from painting for almost 18 months. Pavy returned to his studio in Lafayette, Louisiana and is again immersed in the life, music and imagery of the rich Acadian culture of Southwest Louisiana. He resides with his family in Lafayette.

For additional information contact the gallery at 504.522.1999 or visit our Web site www.arthurrogergallery.com.