

# Marlborough

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## **Richard Estes / New York by Night**

September 20 - October 20, 2012

The Directors of Marlborough Gallery are pleased to announce that an exhibition of new work by the contemporary American Realist painter, Richard Estes, will open on September 20th at Marlborough Gallery, 40 West 57th Street, and continue through October 20. This exhibition, titled *New York by Night*, marks the artist's nineteenth year with Marlborough.

Estes' exhibition will feature approximately twenty-five paintings focusing on his quintessential subject, New York City. In this body of work, Estes takes advantage of the darkness of night to examine the city as it is lit artificially, creating dramatic plays of light and reflection. In the recent Estes monograph by noted art historian John Wilmerding (Rizzoli, New York, 2006), the author remarks that "one of the visual themes that runs through nearly all of Estes' work is his fascination with reflections in glassy surfaces, from windows and polished metals to extended surfaces of water. These reflections become agents of the most subtle perceptual ambiguity and visual complexity...Seldom have simplicity, ordinariness, even emptiness been so deceptive and optically engaging."

Estes' new body of work continues his exploration of these reflections. *Broadway and 68th*, 2012, captures the vibrant, intricate reflections of the fluorescent lights on the ridged ceiling of the scaffolding as well as those of the street lights on the wet pavement, creating a golden glow. *Checkout*, 2012, affords a view through the display window of the customers at the checkout. The mirrored walls of this display case, however, create a disorienting scene in which it is difficult to determine what is reflected in the mirrors and what is not, forming a visual complexity that draws in the viewer.

In addition to the cityscapes, Estes' 2011 series depicting the Staten Island Ferry as it travels to and from Manhattan will be exhibited. Here the lights of the ferry cause its own weathered, red surface to glow, and the shimmering lights of the city bounce off of the water. Especially noticeable are the swirling strokes of Estes' brush as he paints the water's wake. Calligraphic and lush, they are in sharp contrast to the tightly controlled passages with which he depicts the reflections.

Estes is widely considered the master of Photorealism. Unlike many artists practicing this style, however, Estes does not project an image onto a canvas and then paint it. He uses different pho-

tographs to assimilate a scene then paints the work free-handed, using both the photographs and his intuition to create the image. The critic John Perreault has written, "in his own way Estes is making paintings, moving from one carefully defined format to another within his cityscape genre, that bear comparison with the greatest representational and abstract art of the past.... Depending on one's angle of view, Estes is a contemporary Realist utilizing some of the techniques of Photorealism – the undisguised use of photo sources, for instance, to create high-information representations – or, alternately, a Photorealist who employs perspective and compositional devices inherited from historical forms of representation." Estes himself has said, "The photograph is like a reference, a sketch. The great thing about the photograph is that you can stop things. I always thought of myself as a Realist painter. The photo is just a convenience."

Estes was born in Kewanee, Illinois in 1932. From 1952 to 1956 he studied at the Art Institute of Chicago. He moved to New York in 1959 and had his first New York show in 1967 at the Allan Stone Gallery. In 1996 he was awarded the MECA Award for Achievement as a Visual Artist at the Maine College of Art in Portland. A retrospective of the artist's work, *Richard Estes: The Sensuousness of the Real*, was held in 2007 at Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid and Palazzo Magnani, Reggio Emilia, Italy. The artist currently lives and works in New York and Maine.

Estes' works can be found in many public collections, including: Académie Française, Paris, France; The Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois; Des Moines Art Center, Iowa; Detroit Institute of Arts, Michigan; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois; Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York; Nelson-Atkins Museum of Modern Art, Kansas City, Missouri; Neue Galerie der Stadt Aachen, Ludwig Collection, Aachen, Germany; Teheran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran; Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York.

A fully illustrated catalogue will be available at the time of the exhibition.

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