

# PETER BLUM CHELSEA

For Immediate Release:

**Richard Allen Morris**

*Morris Code*

**Works from 1957 to 2007**

March 21<sup>st</sup> to May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009

Peter Blum is pleased to announce the exhibition **Richard Allen Morris: *Morris Code - Works from 1957 to 2007***, opening on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009 at Peter Blum Chelsea, 526 West 29<sup>th</sup> Street. This will be Richard Allen Morris first exhibition with the Peter Blum Gallery.

**Richard Allen Morris: *Morris Code*** is comprised of paintings and objects from the late 1950s up to 2007. Morris often is referred to as a “painter’s painter,” who has throughout his career predominantly explored the potential of painting. The self-taught Morris is based in San Diego, well off the beaten track of the international art scene. Nevertheless, he has always been keenly aware of the history of art as well as contemporary movements. Working in a bookstore for the last fifty years, gave Morris access to a variety of art magazines, which he studied and collected obsessively. His incisive observational skills allowed him to adopt many different styles throughout his career, pushing his work to the limits of the tension between object and relief as well as playfully teasing the border between representation and abstraction. Morris’ work is anchored in a restless engagement with Abstract Expressionism, something he often translates into a more accessible Pop format. These distinctive qualities have made his close friend, John Baldessari, who Morris met in the 1950s, an important advocate of his work.

In the 1960s Morris produced a series of caricature-like close-ups of heads as well as 3-dimensional gun objects. For these guns, which he continued creating through the 1990s, Morris assembles materials that are readily available (cardboard, wood, old paint tubes, recycled canvas) into poignant visual commentaries of our time. Around 1974 his paintings became increasingly abstract and focused on small formats, often using leftover wood as a painting support. In these different series, Morris squeezed paint straight out of the tube onto the canvas, applied thick paint with a palette knife onto long slats of wood, or reused old cut-up paintings to create colorful new collages.

Little known outside of California, Morris has received serious attention in Europe with a major exhibition at Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld Germany in 2004 and currently at the Daros Collection in Zürich. Morris had numerous gallery shows in Cologne, Zürich and Paris.

Richard Allen Morris was born in 1933 in Long Beach, CA and currently lives and works in San Diego. His first solo exhibition was in 1960 at the Art Center in La Jolla, La Jolla, CA.. From the 1960s to early 2000s he was predominantly shown in the San Diego area. Morris had his New York solo debut in 2004 at the CUE Art Foundation. In 2005, the above-mentioned exhibition at the Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld traveled to the San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art. In recent years, Morris’ work was included in important institutional exhibitions at Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland; Kunstmuseum Wiesbaden, Germany as well as at the Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

*In the front gallery, **Ruben Ochoa** will present the sculpture “three the hard way”, which concurs with his major site-specific installation **Collapsed** at **Peter Blum Soho** (99 Wooster Street, from March 19<sup>th</sup> to May 9<sup>th</sup>).*

For additional information and photographic material please contact Simone Subal at [chelsea@peterblumgallery.com](mailto:chelsea@peterblumgallery.com).  
Our gallery hours are from Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 6pm.