

Greenberg Van Doren Gallery is pleased to present a two-person exhibition

Unlikely Friends: James Brooks & Dan Flavin

January 5 – February 18, 2012

Greenberg Van Doren Gallery is pleased to present *Unlikely Friends: James Brooks & Dan Flavin*, a two-person exhibition featuring works on paper and canvas by James Brooks and fluorescent light sculptures by Dan Flavin. The exhibition will be on view from January 5th to February 18th, 2012. An illustrated catalogue with an essay by Tiffany Bell has been published on the occasion of the exhibition.

This exhibition pairs these visually disparate bodies of work by exploring the mutual professional respect and friendship Brooks and Flavin had for one another, demonstrated through correspondence, curation of exhibitions and dedication of artworks. While Brooks' painterly Abstract Expressionist tableaux vary tremendously from Flavin's controlled, conceptually driven Minimalist light sculptures, both artists paid particular attention to color and the application of their media on the base surface whether paper, canvas or wall.

In 1984, Flavin curated an exhibition of Brooks' works on paper at The Dan Flavin Art Institute/Dia Art Foundation in Bridgehampton, NY, titled *The Drawings of James Brooks 1946 – 1978*. Several of the works included in Flavin's show will be on view in *Unlikely Friends*. In her essay, Tiffany Bell outlines the formal variance amongst these works and why they were perhaps of particular interest to Flavin:

These drawings do not represent a signature style but suggest invention of form and experimentation with technique. A variety of mediums are used: ink, gouache, dye, pastel, acrylic and collage. And there is great diversity in the way the marks were made and look, from the liquid, flowing blobs of ink in *Untitled #16* (1964) to the more staccato, bluntly established lines in *Untitled* (1978).... Brooks similarly challenges the perception of drawing and random line, or consciously applied brushstroke and dripped paint, by overlaying the various techniques or allowing the brushed strokes to appear more random than the dripped lines that define shape and form.

Similarly, Brooks' works on canvas fall into a liminal realm where it becomes difficult to distinguish whether his mark-making is arbitrary or intentional. Brooks' use of color and layering of paint in wide swathes such as the inky blacks and translucent grays and mauves in *Dwar* (1962), or the calico-like interweaving of opaque ochre, rust, black and navy marks with pale sage green, sky blue and peach in *Garamond* (1958) ultimately create rich, textured visual planes.

Flavin produced a series of seven works dedicated to Brooks and his wife, Charlotte Park, in the mid-1960s. The first six works in the series consist of an 8-foot horizontal blue lamp with a 2-foot lamp, in different colors, centrally mounted on top. The seventh work has a 4-foot horizontal blue lamp with a 2-foot pink lamp mounted on top in the same fashion. These works are installed in darkened rooms allowing the colored light to flood the space, presenting a spectacular visual experience.

Greenberg Van Doren is pleased to exhibit the work of Brooks and Flavin together honoring their longstanding camaraderie as well as displaying their two contrasting oeuvres in a unified context.

Greenberg Van Doren Gallery is located at 730 Fifth Avenue at 57th Street, New York, NY 10019.
Gallery Hours: Tuesday through Saturday 10 am – 6 pm.