

**PHILIP GUSTON | JASPER JOHNS**  
**October 25 – December 22, 2007**

Leo Castelli Gallery in cooperation with Brooke Alexander, is pleased to announce the opening of *Philip Guston Jasper Johns*.

At first glance, this pairing might seem antithetical. For many years, Philip Guston was a main progenitor of Abstract Expressionism, leading the art world with thick impasto and emotive brushstrokes. When he emerged in the late 1950's, Jasper Johns counter-acted, some might say even subverted, this school of thought with his cryptic common place subject matter and restrained hand.

And yet, the connections between Guston and Johns are many and various. The former did not remain an abstractionist, and the latter did not remain impersonal. Through the years, a common visual language emerged: watches, light bulbs, shoes, paint brushes, and canvases themselves appear again and again in the works of both. These objects serve dual purposes, both a literal examples of the everyday life surrounding the artist, and as totems that hold a special, mysterious significance in the realm of their private worlds. As Robert Storr notes, in an essay written for the occasion of this exhibition, in these images lies "the uncanniness of the principle sign – or thought – objects deploy, forms that seem to anchor their compositions yet render them and their meanings inherently unstable."

Similarly, both Guston and Johns lend much paint, and ink, to the exploration and reflections of the Self. Philip Guston repeatedly represents himself as a hermetic, white-hooded figure, constantly moving through a lonely world, conspicuously anonymous while at the same time emotionally exposed. Jasper Johns reveals himself by using his body; the direct imprint of his hands, arms, and face standing as devices of action, and as fragments of self-portraiture. In both cases, what is revealed about each artist is as much as what is hidden from view.

These themes and variations, both direct and symbolic, are touched on in paintings, drawings, and prints by both artists. The exhibition, on view in both galleries, is open from October 25th through December 22nd.

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