

DAVID NOLAN **NEW YORK**

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November 25, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Steve DiBenedetto, Alexander Ross, and James Siena: *Morphological Mutiny*

Project Room: Ciprian Muresan: *Incorrigible Believers*

December 10 – January 23, 2009

Opening reception: Thurs. Dec. 10, 6-8 pm

David Nolan Gallery is pleased to present *Morphological Mutiny*, an exhibition of recent paintings and works on paper by three New York artists: **Steve DiBenedetto, Alexander Ross and James Siena**. In the project room, we will feature a new installation by Romanian artist, **Ciprian Muresan**, entitled *Incorrigible Believers*. The exhibition will open Thursday, December 10, 2009 and remain on view through January 23, 2010.

DiBenedetto, Ross and Siena are inventors of hyperreal spaces whose laws are governed by specific internal logic systems. What ties the work together is the surprising pleasure each artist takes in breaking down self-imposed parameters. As acts of *morphological mutiny*, or rebellion of form and structure, the works' growth and decay explain the life cycle of worlds run by digits, measurements and technology. If the works were placed along a barometer measuring structural integrity, James Siena and Steve DiBenedetto would occupy opposite extremes, with Ross's concerns formally and conceptually balanced between the two.

James Siena employs the mathematical laws of algorithms to predetermine the shape, color, and placement of his forms, which he calls "image-structures." His tight moves feel like Escher tessellations, but have recently found release in figurative experimentation as seen in the outline of a woman in *Flat Red Girl*, or the suggestion of a face in *Decaying Old Man*.

Alexander Ross creates green-blue otherworldly spaces informed by microbiology. The alien occupants and monstrous blobs in his works are figures inspired by observations that he makes through the lens of a microscope. Ross short-circuits his biology-based systems by distorting and enhancing that which he sees—sometimes translating his observations into clay maquettes which he will photograph, manipulate on Photoshop, and print out to use as a collage elements for his works on paper.

Steve DiBenedetto resists adherence to a single system of looking or creating. Instead, his subjects, taken from the journals of philosophers and inventors and architects, are his control. The Octopus, The Helicopter and The Glass Tower emerge and evaporate in each work, their physical and psychological engagement denoted by their location within the composition. In this recent work, The Glass Tower has absorbed the octopus before self-imploding. DiBenedetto's mutiny is in his treatment of his subjects, which he renders in an unruly painterly technique that is on a constant quest to push the boundaries of what is considered painting to its utmost extremes.

Ciprian Muresan recontextualizes and deconstructs the works of well known literary and art historical figures. Working conceptually in all media, Muresan has appropriated works by Yves Klein, Eugène Ionesco, and Andrei Tarkovsky. For the gallery's project room, Muresan will present a new sculptural installation entitled *Incorrigible Believers*, consisting of miniature wooden church pews made for children, leading up to the display of Muresan's written ending to Franz Kafka's unfinished 1926 novel, "The Castle." Muresan reinterprets the meanings of the original text, and brings up questions regarding ideology and the formation of collective and individual identity.

James Siena (b. 1957, California) received his BFA from Cornell University in 1979. Siena's work has been featured in over 55 group exhibitions, including the 2004 Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial. The recipient of multiple honors and awards, Siena has received an Award in Art from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York (2000); the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Competition Award (1999); and The New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Painting (1994). His work can be found in numerous public collections including the Des Moines Art Center, Iowa; Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY; Museum of Fine Art, Boston; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Philip Morris Collection, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Siena completed an artist-in-residency program at Yaddo in 2004, and recently was elected a Member of Yaddo.

Alexander Ross (b. 1960, Colorado) earned his B.F.A. from Massachusetts College of Art in 1983. He has received the Lewis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award (2004), the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship (2003), and the Philip Morris uror's Merit Award for New American Talent (1997). His works have been exhibited in museums and galleries worldwide since in the mid 1990s, including an eight year survey at The Contemporary Art Museum in St. Louis (2008), *Remote Viewing* at the Whitney Museum of American Art (2005), SITE Santa Fe, NM (2004), The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, NY (2007); The Columbus Museum of Art, OH (2007); The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, Skidmore College, NY (2006); The American Academy of Arts and Letters, NY (2002); Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City (2001); PS1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, NY (2000); and SEAD Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium (1998).

Steve DiBenedetto (b. 1958, New York City) earned his bachelors degree from the Parsons School of Design in 1980. DiBenedetto has received the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award (2002), the Rosenthal Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters (2003), and the Guggenheim Fellowship Award (2003). His work has been featured in numerous museum exhibitions, including a 20-year retrospective at The University of SUNY, Albany, NY (2008); *Remote Viewing* at The Whitney Museum of Art, NY (2005); *Form and Story: Narration in Recent Painting*, University of Richmond Museums, Richmond, VA (2009); P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City (2004); MassArt, Boston (2004); American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York (2003); Sammlung Rolf Ricke, Neuen Museum, Nurnberg, Germany (2002); Rosenwald- Wolf Gallery, The University of the Arts, Philadelphia (2002); The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, CT (2001); *Le Consortium Collection*, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (1998); The Museum of Contemporary Art, Geneva (1994); FRAC Nord-Pas-De-Calais, Lille (1993); and The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (1989). DiBenedetto has taught at numerous institutions throughout the United States, including Rutgers University (2002-05), Cooper Union (2002-04), Columbia University (2001-02), and The School of Visual Arts (1993-99).

Ciprian Muresan (b. 1977, Dej, Romania) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts, Cluj-Napoca in 2000. He was recently included in the exhibition, *The Generational: Younger Than Jesus* at the New Museum in New York (2009), and his work has been featured other group shows at the Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel (2002), the Athens Biennial (2007), and the Museum Folkwang, Essen (2008). He is the co-editor of VERSION magazine and editor of IDEA magazine. Muresan represented Romania at the Venice Biennale in 2009 with a video work, "Dog Luv."