

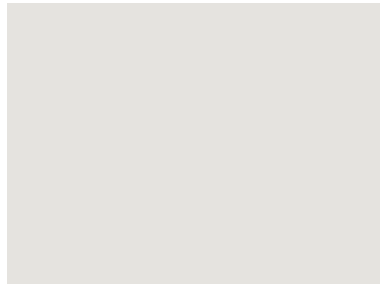
ARTCAT

Mike Howard. Courtesy of Mike Howard.



Mike Howard

60 Orchard
60 Orchard Street, 917-771-1160
East Village / Lower East Side
May 22 - June 7, 2007
Opening: Tuesday, May 22, 6 - 10 PM
Web Site



Larger Map

"To this day, many persons ask me whatever became of that artist that I showed who did those paintings of dogs and bear hunts." Michael Walls

In 1993, the prominent collector, Jason Rubell, curated a solo show of Howard's paintings shortly before closing his gallery in Miami. For personal and artistic reasons, Howard has not shown since but has produced a consistent group of work.

Howard, in keeping with his inclination for "off the beaten path" projects is presenting his latest work on the lower east side in an abandoned space located at 60 Orchard street. His latest series carries forth his continued interest in appropriation. In this latest work, the artist explores iconic moments in history such as the assassinations of Leon Trotsky, Martin Luther King, John Lennon and John F. Kennedy as well as the tragic demise of such Rock legends as Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin and artists Jean-Michel Basquiat and Michael Stewart. A separate series involves homage to some of Howard's favorite pioneers of art: Al Hansen, Don Judd, Marcel Duchamp, Jasper Johns and Andy Warhol.

The artist has not shown in New York City since 1991 when he presented several large-scale canvases at the Baby Doll Lounge, which served as backdrops for the lounge dancers. Howard's interest in performance and showing in spaces outside the gallery comes from his affiliations with the Fluxus movement and his artistic comrades whom he met while at Rutgers University. Geoff Hendricks, Bob Watts, Al Hansen and Leon Golub were a major influence.

While working for Don Judd and attending The Whitney Museum Independent Program, Howard performed his 1st Fluxus ("approved") event in 1970, which entailed the artist performing a series of weight lifting poses for the crowd while donning bikini shorts. Trisha Brown was in attendance during a performance and soon invited Mike to perform with her dance troupe.

In 1973, Howard performed in a Fluxus event at Rutgers University with other students and faculty. That performance involved the artist in a red beard recreating "Wheatfields" by Vincent Van Gogh. During the performance Howard pulled out a revolver loaded with blanks and shot himself in the stomach upon completion of the painting. Special effects included ketchup covering the artist's shirt (as well as some of his captive viewers). Howard recalled that a member of the NEA was in attendance who made it no secret that she was less than pleased with his unorthodox display (which entailed a live sheep on stage that had become startled by the shooting and abruptly ran off.) There were also very mixed reactions from a