

## ***Memento Mori***

December 1, 2006 – February 3, 2007

*For immediate release*

Mireille Mosler Ltd. is pleased to announce *Memento Mori*, an exhibition with art from the seventeenth century through the present. *Memento Mori* [Latin: 'Remember that you must die'] has been a fascination for many artists over the past few centuries.

In the seventeenth century in the Netherlands, the term *vanitas* was first introduced to describe a type of painted still life. Any *vanitas* symbol, such as a skull, candle or hourglass, or even an insect or flower, is employed to remind the viewer of the transitoriness of human existence. The *vanitas* paintings were concerned with the fragility of man and his world of desires and pleasures in the face of the inevitability and finality of death.

The earliest paintings in the exhibition are a number of Dutch seventeenth century *vanitas* still lifes, all depicting expensive silver objects, musical instruments as well as skulls. An example of a contemporary *vanitas* still life is George Condo's *Still life with Skull and Snowman* from 1992. Another genre in which we are reminded of the brevity of our life is portraiture. In the seventeenth century, Rembrandt included a skull in the portrait of the apothecary Abraham Francen in a very rare print of 1657. Another example is a painting of a dead baby with musical instruments, painted around the same time in Holland. Today, death is often dealt with more directly: numerous artists are fearless depicting skulls or skeletons or even a more direct representation of death, as in Andy Warhol's *Electric Chair*. The entire show is installed on *Lubaantun*, skull wallpainting by John Armleder.

Works on view by the following artists: Philip Akkerman, D.-L. Alvarez, John Armleder, George Condo, Jan van Dalen, Eugene Delacroix, Paul Delvaux, Iris van Dongen, David Dupuis, André Ethier, Damien Hirst, Jenny Holzer, Robert Mapplethorpe, Robert Morris, Yoshitomo Nara, Bruce Nauman, Arnulf Rainer, Rembrandt, Cindy Sherman, Haim Steinbach, Ricky Swallow, Domenicus van Tol, Rosemarie Trockel, Jan Vermeulen, Vincent Laurensz van der Vinne, Jon Widman and Andy Warhol.

*Memento Mori* will be on view at Mireille Mosler Ltd., 35 East 67<sup>th</sup> Street. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 am to 6:00 pm. For more information contact Diana Turco at #212.249.4195 or via e-mail [Diana@mireillemoslerltd.com](mailto:Diana@mireillemoslerltd.com)