



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAN DIEGO ART PRIZE EXHIBITION: *DOUBLE HEADER*
Featuring Works by **Richard Allen Morris** and **Tom Driscoll**
Sept 19 to Nov 20, 2009
Opening Reception: Sat. Sept 19 25th, 7pm – 9pm
Location: 628 L Street, San Diego, CA 92101

San Diego, CA (Aug 22, 2009) - The San Diego Visual Art's Network, SanDiegoArtist.com and the Omni San Diego Hotel are the proud sponsors of the San Diego Art Prize now in its third year. The Prize is given annually to several established and several emerging artists who have exhibited outstanding achievement in the field of Visual Arts. The Prize recipients will receive a cash grant and an exhibition at L Street Fine Gallery. Each exhibition will pair an established artist with an emerging artist.

The second exhibition in the 2009 series, Double Header will begin Sept 19 with an opening reception from 7pm - 9pm at the L Street Fine Art Gallery and will be on view through November 20th, 2009. Richard Allen Morris selected Tom Driscoll as the emerging artist that he wanted to exhibit with in this exhibition.

Richard Allen Morris was born in Long Beach, CA in 1933. Morris is self taught exploring his enormous interest in art history with no formal art education. He began exhibiting at the age of 26. He served in the Korean War leaving the service in 1956. His first solo show was in 1959 and has had solo and group exhibitions throughout California since. He currently lives and works in San Diego.

Morris's works are firmly anchored in the Abstract Expressionist school. The handling of the paint is always seductive and he managed to transfer that same feeling to his collaged works. You feel these collages are gathered from the snipes and off cuts found in the waste areas of his studio which he spins into gold. He has the obsessive nature of many great artists and has produced a large body of work which treads the line between great sophistication and a child like glee in the world around him.

Morris has been recognized recently in Germany and Switzerland where his work is much in demand. He has been the focus of many exhibitions and catalogues. *Richard Allen Morris: Retrospective, 1958-2005* was an exhibition that includes 150 paintings made over the course of his fifty-year career organized by Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld and shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego in 2005.

Published in Art Scene which is the guide to exhibitions in Southern California of show at Mandarin Gallery in Los Angeles in 2006 was this statement about the show *Body and Soul*. " Richard Allen Morris' brand of eye



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candy sets up this challenge: how much visual incident can be squeezed onto the head of a pin? The effect of walking into a roomful of these impastoed dandies will immediately either put a smile on your face or raise your hackles. But the decorative indulgence is beside the point. Let yourself get your nose up to these things, then step back again so you can go along on Morris' ride. His deft brush takes us to a surprisingly wide variety of places without having appeared to have done very much. "

From this same show David Pagel writes in Special to *The Times* for the *Around the Galleries* feature, ".....playful combination of paint squeezed straight from the tube and slathered on with a palette knife resembles the aftermath of a food fight between Matisse and Gauguin."

Richard Allen Morris is represented by [RB Stevenson Gallery](#), La Jolla.

Tom Driscoll was born in San Diego, California in 1945 and lived in Mission Beach between the ages of one to eight years old. At the age of eight, his family moved to the more arid terrain of Chula Vista when his father went to work at Rohr Corporation a part of San Diego's aerospace industry.

Driscoll was drawn to sculpture early. "A point where I realized I was good with my hands occurred when I was a senior in high school. In an art class I started stone cutting and direct carving on wood. One of my pieces ended up being displayed at the school library. It was the first pat on the back I recall receiving." Those early carvers - Moore, Brancusi and Hepworth - turned his head.

After high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and served with the 82 nd Airborne. Upon returning to San Diego he enrolled at Southwestern College. His exposure to the "Artist Lecture Series" - the guests included Robert Irwin, Paul Brach, Newton Harrison, moderated by John Baldessari. - captured his attention as no other class had up to that point.

A significant change in Tom's career occurred in 1981 when he moved to downtown San Diego. Here he encountered several artists living and working in cheap commercial spaces: Richard Allen Morris, Lynn Engstrom, Barbara Sexton, Gillian Theobald, Carl Peck, Lynn Schuette, Richard Sigmund, William Gambini, Jay Johnson and Gary Ghirardi. "We would each arrive at night after our day jobs to work in our studios. At that time a number of art galleries opened in downtown San Diego: Patty Aande, The Pawn Shop, 552 Gallery, Newmyer, and later Quint Gallery and Sumay Space. These galleries brought all of us together."

Driscoll's work has received critical acclaim and has been included in numerous solo and group exhibitions throughout Southern California, i.e. Mandarin Gallery in Los Angeles and Quint Gallery in San Diego. Best known for his cast cement and large-scale sculptures (cones and spheres), Driscoll has produced a body of



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diversified work over the years including a recent series where he used Styrofoam and vacuum formed plastic packaging as molds. The inner negative spaces of the material produced an array of abstract shapes replacing the original product.

With his masterful handling of material, Tom Driscoll is currently producing an intriguing series of cast epoxy – mysterious in their deep red and amber translucency.

Richard Allen Morris and Tom Driscoll share qualities of honesty, perseverance and a respect for art history. San Diego has benefited from their continued presence.

For more information contact

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photo credit: Erubiel Ramos Acevedo

Richard Allen Morris: My Card, 2009,

Acrylic on canvas, 24 by 18 inches

Courtesy of RB Stevenson Gallery La Jolla



Tom Driscoll: Ambertrap, 2009

Cast epoxy resin, 5 x 21 x 6 inches

Courtesy of Quint Contemporary Art, La Jolla



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