

# JAMES COHAN GALLERY

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Roxy Paine, *Drawing for Distillation*, 2010, India ink and graphite on paper, 29 3/4 X 41 1/4 inches

## **ROXY PAINE: *Distillation***

**October 16 – December 11, 2010**

For Roxy Paine's fourth solo exhibition at James Cohan Gallery, opening October 16 and running through December 11, 2010, the gallery is proud to present the artist's new large-scale installation *Distillation* (2010). A single continuous piece, the artwork begins at the gallery's front door and pierces its walls to travel all the way through the space to the back offices. The sculpture is Paine's newest addition to his stainless steel Dendroid series, which includes *Maelstrom*, featured on the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Roof Garden in 2009.

Roxy Paine's monumental new work *Distillation* becomes a metaphor for the artist's mental process. Paine re-examines alchemical methods to create a meditation on mystical industrialism. If the process of distillation is an attempt to find purity, the sculpture *Distillation* demonstrates the impossibility of that goal. An apt analogy can be found in Hilary Mantel's writing on the alchemic practice in her 1989 novel *Fludd*, "After separation, drying out, moistening, dissolving,

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coagulating, fermenting, comes purification, recombination: the creation of substances the world until now has never beheld.” Paine describes his process as the fermentation of bundles of information, then the extraction of discrete compounds from the resultant mash, which when fractionated, overlaid and recombined become a transmutation from the familiar to the entirely new.

Paine's extensive body of work explores collisions between the natural world and the industrial. *Distillation* is an amalgam of structures that refer to vascular, neural, taxonomic, arboreal, mycological and industrial systems. The sculpture includes elements such as valves and flanges from petro chemical plants, tanks used for food processing, and glass vessels from the pharmaceutical industry. These seemingly standardized elements coexist with constructed parts such as blood vessels, neurons, hallucinogenic fungus, mycelium, bacterial formations, tree branches, a pair of kidneys, and a black box—all of these elements have varying levels of finish, from polished to raw steel to the introduction of paint.

On view in Gallery One, is a new wall installation from Paine's Replicant series. In this series the artist creates meticulous simulacra of botanical species and eukaryotic organisms. Paine chooses to depict undesirable and toxic classes of plants or fungus; in the case of this installation 25 different fungus species from the psychoactive to the poisonous compete for space directly on the wall.

Works from Paine's Dendroid series are included in many important public collections including *Split* (2003), Seattle Art Museum; *Placebo* (2004), St Louis Art Museum; *Conjoined* (2007), Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; *Askew* (2009), North Carolina Museum of Art; *Graft* (2009), National Gallery Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; *Billboard Façade* (2009/2010), WANAS Foundation, Knislinge, Sweden. Paine's upcoming international public commissions to be installed over the next six months include *Inversion* (2008), The Israel Museum; *100 Foot Line* (2010), The National Gallery of Canada; *Ferment* (2010), Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO; *Yield* (2010), Crystal Bridges, Bentonville, AK; and *Discrepancy* (2011) commissioned by the insurance company Munich Re to be installed in Munich, Germany.

Roxy Paine was born in 1966 in New York and studied at both the College of Santa Fe in New Mexico and the Pratt Institute in New York. Since 1990, his work has been exhibited internationally in galleries and museums worldwide. Paine's artworks are included in major collections, among them: De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg, NE; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Museum of Modern Art, NY; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA; Whitney Museum of American Art, NY. Roxy Paine lives and works in Brooklyn and Treadwell, NY.

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