



Hugh Steers: *Blue Towel, Red Tank* (1988), oil on canvas, 66.25h x 72w in; *Black Bag I* (1993), oil on canvas, 45h x 38w in; *I.V.* (1991), oil on gessoed paper, 14.5h x 10.75w in

Alexander Gray Associates announces representation of the Estate of Hugh Steers

Alexander Gray Associates is pleased to announce its representation of the Estate of Hugh Steers (1963–1995). Steers was celebrated for his allegorical painting that captured the emotional and political tenor of New York in the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly the impact of Queer identity and the AIDS crisis. Born in Washington, D.C., Steers studied painting at Yale University, and pursued a commitment to figuration throughout his career, cut dramatically short by AIDS at the age of 32. Influenced by historical figures of American art, including Thomas Eakins, Edward Hopper, and Paul Cadmus, he embraced representational painting and figuration at a time when such approaches were especially unfashionable.

Steers described his artistic perspective in an interview in September 1992: “I think I’m in the tradition of a certain kind of American artist—artists whose work embodies a certain gorgeous bleakness. Edward Hopper, Jackson Pollock, Franz Kline—they all had this austere beauty to them. They found beauty in the most brutal forms. I think that’s what characterizes America, the atmosphere, its culture, its cities and landscape. They all have that soft glow of brutality.”

While embracing the polemics of identity politics through his visual content, Steers’ emotionally charged painting took a departure from the more didactic work of his peers. The last five years of his artistic practice focused on AIDS as a subject matter, drawing on community experience and mixing dreamlike allegory with figurative realism. The resulting images amplify issues of mortality and isolation, defiance and compassion. Hugh Steers’ artwork is in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Walker Art Center, and the Denver Art Museum. A forthcoming catalogue raisonné of Steers’ paintings and drawings will be organized by Visual AIDS.

To inaugurate its representation of the Estate of Hugh Steers, the Gallery presents an exhibition contextualizing his work with two generational predecessors, Paul Cadmus and Andy Warhol. Placed in conversation, the works demonstrate progressing artistic and cultural concerns, and chart cultural reception to figurative work representing three slices of 20th Century Gay experience. *Cadmus, Steers, Warhol* is on view at Alexander Gray Associates June 8 – July 20, 2012.

Alexander Gray Associates is a contemporary art gallery based in New York. The gallery has established a profile for high-quality exhibitions focused on mid-career artists who emerged in the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Influential in political, social and cultural spheres, these artists are notable for creating work that crosses geographic borders, generational contexts and artistic disciplines. Gallery hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 11:00 AM – 6:00 PM. Gallery summer hours: Tuesday–Friday, 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM