

DAVID NOLAN **NEW YORK**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Serban Savu: The Edge of the Empire
February 5 – March 28, 2009
Opening Reception: Thursday, February 5, 6-8pm

New York, NY, January 10, 2009 – David Nolan Gallery is pleased to present the first major solo exhibition in the United States of Romanian artist Serban Savu. This will be the third exhibition at the gallery's new Chelsea location.

Savu is part of a group of artists from Cluj, schooled in the tradition of Social Realism, who grew up during the overturn of the Communist regime (1989). He is one of the few painters from this group who still lives and works in Romania as it transitions into a democratic, capitalist state. As the title suggests, "The Edge of The Empire" references Romania as a country that has always been on the margins of great civilizations- the Romans (27 B.C.- 476 A.D.), the Ottomans (1299–1923), the Austro-Hungarians (1867 - 1918), and the Soviet Union (1922-1991). His paintings focus on the absurdity and uselessness of "The New Man," the Communist model of the ideal worker, who is ill equipped to perform in Savu's fallen utopias. His landscapes are not spectacular scenes, but daily ones in which the sociopolitical issues are hidden rather than visible.

Savu's thousands of delicate touches of the brush to the canvas evoke a knowingness, ambition and skepticism that distance him from the figures in his paintings. The paintings are not troubled or angry, but their patient straightforwardness suggests their being motivated by a calculated dissatisfaction and a history of defeat. The palette realistically represents the Romanian landscapes, imbuing the work with an air of nostalgia.

In 2007, David Nolan Gallery featured Savu's work in a Romanian group show *Across the Trees* (the English translation of Transylvania). The response to their first showing in New York was outstanding, and they received reviews in *The New York Times*, *ArtForum*, *Flash Art* and *The New Yorker*. In 2002 Savu was awarded the Nicolae Lorga postgraduate research grant, and in 2007 he was short listed for the Sovereign European Art Prize.

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