

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

“Fierce and Delicate: The Brief History of a Painting”

Radar (in SoDo): 2724 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South, Suite A Seattle, WA 98134

Saturday, August 27, 2011: 8:00PM

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Press Quip: An art performance by neo-Symbolist painter Ford Crull featuring the birth, destruction and rebirth of a work of art...in about an hour.

Ford Crull’s paintings are often about birth, death and rebirth. On August 27, in the midst of his series begun in Shanghai in 2008 and continuing in Berlin in 2012, Crull will enact these phenomena with paint and fire. The performance will be divided into two acts: in the first half hour, “Initiation,” Crull will paint a huge canvas (approximately 15’ x 10’) under the influence of free-flowing bebop jazz. Crull is known for filling the surfaces of his paintings with a characteristic lexicon of symbols that has become Crull’s personal visual vocabulary. These signs and symbols circulate throughout his body of work, taking on new meanings within the eyes of each viewer. An intrinsic, archetypal quality of Crull’s hieroglyphics allows the audience to interact with the work in a familiar yet undefined way- like the raiment of a dream.

In the second half hour, “Destruction and Rebirth”, Crull will carve his canvas with a torch, spurred on by raucous music originating from the Northwest- Hendrix, Nirvana, etc- in an homage to Crull’s hometown. The painting, now backlit, will begin to open up as the artist pierces the surface from behind, revealing at first radiating, and subsequently jarring, beams of light that blitz the audience. Ultimately the artist will emerge through the canvas anew. Critic and poet Anthony Haden-Guest, who has been witnessing Crull’s performance practices in New York, recently wrote:

“Ford Crull deals with dualities. A canvas can be an arena for darkness and light, war and peace, aggression and reconciliation, and there is a duality about the paintwork too, which is at once fierce and delicate. The knots and aggregations of pigment which Crull deploys are clearly a symbolic language but they do not suggest coded meaning so much as a grid of energy. So this was the armory Crull had at his disposal when he began to make performance a part of his practice in Shanghai in 2008. Just add fire.

Crull doesn’t harness performance just to make a picture into a Big Picture though. For Crull, performance brings focus and ratchets up the intensity. We can, I think, take it as a given that there is even more inert matter than usual on the artscape these days, whether it takes the form of product, of luxury goods or of Duchamp 101 but Crull’s art and the consuming fire that is part of that art together say...Enough.”

Ford Crull was raised in Seattle and received his B.F.A. from the University of Washington in 1976. After college, Crull made New York city his home and established himself as a neo-Symbolist painter in the 1980’s. Since, Crull’s paintings have been added to the collections of The National Gallery of Art, The Smithsonian Institute, The Metropolitan Museum, and The Brooklyn Museum, among many others. Today, Ford Crull splits his time between studios in Manhattan and Woodstock, New York.

Live music will follow. Beer and wine will be served.

This event is co-sponsored by the Center on Contemporary Art (CoCA) and Friesen Gallery.