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Marko Panas, Untitled, Mixed media on canvas, 2008, 48 x 48 inches

MARK PANAS

“ These will be burned “

Preview, Thursday May 28th, 2009

Exhibition, May 29th – May 31th, 2009

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Marko Panas, Untitled, Mixed media on canvas, 2005, 2 x 2 inches

Galerie Mark Hachem is pleased to present Marko Panas solo exhibition.

Marko Panas has been formally creating bold, large-scale artworks for more than 15 years (and informally creating art for even longer). His art began in kindergarten, when he convinced his teacher to allow him to tape pieces of paper to the wall and throw paint them—even at that nascent age, art-making for him would always be intensely physical. By high school, he had developed a well-articulated practice outside the limits of academia, devising recipes for paints, techniques for texture and color, and creating his own tools, including the use of fire that has since become his calling card.

He began his formal training at the San Francisco Art Institute from 1998; during that time, his schooling included a crucial stint at the China National Academy of Art in Hangzhou, China.

In 2008, Markos completed a Masters of Fine Arts at the highly esteemed Pratt Institute of Art in New York. Along the way, he has shown work at galleries all over the world, in cities such as Paris, San Francisco, Miami, Athens, New York, and Los Angeles.

With their sweeping, ebullient swaths of color, Panas' canvases evoke echoes of abstract expressionism. Indeed, in his early childhood, it was the great abstract painters of the 1950s--Pollock, Rothko, Frankenthaler, and Klein--who first moved Panas beyond figurative art, spurring him to visions of limitless aesthetic horizons. However, his work transcends this definition. Not merely two-dimensional, at times it can barely be described as painting. The artist's use of fire, in conjunction with materials of varying temperature resistance, places his work closer to what might be deemed "pyro-articulations."

For Panas, using fire is *ruling chaos*; the artist guides a spirit of creativity that is ultimately beyond his control. The works are a tangible articulation of the most basic, and therefore most compelling, life forces: the elements, substances, energies, and movements of the material world. Their creation is dynamic and interactive. Panas wrestles with light, heat, air, and moisture, *challenging* the nature of the elements and our relationship to them.

Needless to say, Panas devotes large amounts of time and attention to his artworks, even putting himself in dangerous situations during their creation. Working with fire and flammable materials such as flammable gases, gasoline and plastics is not a lightly undertaken venture, even when the artist is

outfitted in proper, individually tailored and customized, safety equipment. Paint, glitter, and polymers are either dried naturally or burned, often exposed to natural elements such as rain or snow, and often sanded or hand-worked to achieve their texture, color, and consistency.

The final application of flame, smoke, and ash is the most exciting and energizing part of the process—the fire may produce unexpectedly beautiful results on the canvas, or it may simply burn the canvas into an unusable mess. The resulting imagery can be delicate and muted, or bright and aggressive, bringing in hyper male and female qualities, as the layers of pigments emerge and bubble between the unpredictable play of scorched process. It's that unexpectedness, and that dynamic performance of creation, that inspires Panas most.

**Exhibition “These will be burned “ by MARKO PANAS from May 28th to May 31th, 2009
Galerie Mark Hachem, 988 Madison Avenue & 77th Street, New York, NY 10075**

Opening reception, Thursday May 28th, 2009 at 6:00 till 9:00 pm