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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: AUGUST 20, 1996

EXHIBITION: LUC TUYMANS "The Heritage"

DATES: September 20 - October 19, 1996

Opening on Friday, September 20th, the gallery will present new paintings by the Belgian artist Luc Tuymans. The exhibition is entitled "The Heritage". This will be the artist's second solo exhibition in New York.

Since his participation in Documenta IX in 1992, Luc Tuymans has become one of Europe's most prominent young painters. His exhibitions at the Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland; Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld, Germany; the Renaissance Society, Chicago; and the ICA, London, as well as numerous group shows have focused attention on painting at a time when the critical discourse has (once again) turned away from this traditional form to other media.

The ten works in this exhibition focus on the United States. Luc Tuymans was particularly interested in a mood which he perceived here after the Oklahoma City bombing--a feeling of uncertainty and a sense of loss. For the artist, this terrorism from within the country's borders reveals a vulnerability both physical and psychological new to the United States.

Many of the paintings in the show depict *normal*, almost stereotypical American imagery, for example: two baseball caps; Mount Rushmore; the image of a man working; a portrait; a birthday cake. However rather than being reassuring in their familiarity, Luc Tuymans' treatment of these images, emphasized by his unusual palette, makes them unsettling. These paintings draw their strength from the artist's deep understanding of the psychological power behind an image. Thus the baseball caps become a monument to anonymity; the American portrait turns out to be that of a reactionary assassin; and the American working man in actuality is mixing toxic chemicals. In these ten "Heritage" paintings, Luc Tuymans depicts his version of the dark side of America. In the process, he proves that painting is alive and well, and can still at the end of the twentieth century spark a complex and potentially disturbing discourse.

For further information, please contact the gallery at 212-966-9074.