

For immediate release

**ALI BANISADR**



**DAVID PETTIBONE**



**MARY RAAP**



## **Ali Banisadr, David Pettibone, Mary Raap: Fellows Exhibition 2008**

October 1 - October 26, 2008

Opening reception: Tuesday, September 30, 6 – 8 pm  
Press preview with the artists: September 30, 5 – 5:30 pm  
Press inquiries: contact Katie Albert, [Katie@nyaa.edu](mailto:Katie@nyaa.edu)

New York Academy of Art is pleased to present an exhibition of new works by **Ali Banisadr**, **David Pettibone** and **Mary Raap**, the three artists who were awarded Postgraduate Fellowships at the **New York Academy of Art** for the 2007-08 academic year. The powerful group of paintings that emerged from their time in residence at the Academy will be on view from October 1st through October 26<sup>th</sup>.

The annual Postgraduate Fellows Exhibition at the Academy is a candid glimpse at three emerging artists, each a recent exceptional student, invited to spend an additional year working at the Academy's studios, and encouraged to develop a body of new work that is truly his or her own. This exhibition further illuminates that each painter possesses a singular, completely contemporary vision of the medium, the figure, and their infinite possibilities.

Armed with the same instruction in artistic anatomy, perspective, and the history of the craft of oil painting, each remains a "figurative painter" retaining a visceral connection to the human body. Each artist must work within the transcendent and limiting parameters of his or her own body as the vehicle of thought and painterly action, but venture further to consider, desire and know the bodies of others both observed and imagined, from dreams, memories, history and direct scrutiny.

**Ali Banisadr's** lush landscapes straddle representation and abstraction as well as universes past, present and parallel. Seductively riveting in their expressionistic painterliness, they invite the viewer to lean in and look closely. The viewer may be surprised as the images begin to surface; at first explosive, they become ecstatic and dissolving. Each piece indicates many potentialities, some pleasant, some not, and combined is the kind of artistic endeavor that is rife with impending interpretations but is never vague or stuttering.

**David Pettibone** takes a direct view of the human condition, posing models – individuals, really – in his intimate studio. He spends hours and hours with his enormous canvases and his subjects, observing the life within each and observing everything he can of the surface of things too. These works could be described as "un-heroic" in the best sense; they are extremely affectionate, and we, too, feel close to his sitters as we slide across his lush painted illusions of cloth, flesh and sky. Empathy, it seems, is his preferred medium.

**Mary Raap** approaches the canvas less directly and with a slow and careful concern, if not obsession, with its skin-like surface. This metaphoric understanding of the epidermal layers of paint provides her with a methodology and a subject. As with Banisadr's work, the narrative found in Raap's art is based in various measures on forms, shapes and rendered objects that guide us toward something we find familiar – in her case domestic objects, lists, gates and the performance of the painter through gesture and exquisitely sensual touch.

### **About the New York Academy of Art**

The New York Academy of Art, founded twenty-six years ago by Andy Warhol, Tom Wolfe and other art-world luminaries, is exceptional among American Master of Fine Art degree programs in its efforts to advance representational painting, drawing and sculpture centering on the human figure, as the basis for the development of vital contemporary art. More than 900 artists have received the MFA degree from the Academy's Graduate School of Figurative Art. The Academy is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit educational and cultural institution. For further information on the Academy, its Graduate School, Continuing Education courses and public programs, please visit [www.nyaa.edu](http://www.nyaa.edu).