

October 22, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Jess

(1923-2004)

*Paste-Ups*

November 5 – December 5, 2009

The Tibor de Nagy Gallery is pleased to present its second exhibition of works by the celebrated painter and collage artist Jess (Collins), a leading light of the San Francisco art scene from the 1950s until his death in 2004, and one of the most original artists of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Jess was a quietly independent artist who in his paintings, collages, and sculptures developed a complex synthesis of art and literary history. For decades known mostly to the cognoscenti, in recent years his works have received attention from a younger generation attuned to his interests in far-ranging mythologies, transformative narrative, and the appropriation of images.

This exhibition is a survey of “Paste-ups” spanning nearly the entire length of Jess’s art-making career, from 1952 to 1989. Early collages use cutout advertising images and slogans to present a satirical, absurdist view of sexuality and politics. Later more intricate collages juxtapose layers of jigsaw puzzle pieces and cutout images to create protean narrative landscapes. In reexamining myths through a synthesis of art and literature, Jess’s work remains a crucial assemblage of the meaning of our time.

Jess's art is about the retrieval of images from a culture overflowing with them. Using the quintessentially modernist form, collage, he creates odd interminglings and fantastic juxtapositions, employing images taken from sources ranging from Dick Tracy to Dürer, from a Beatles bubblegum card to medical textbook drawings, from 1887 Scientific American line engravings to frames from George Herriman's *Krazy Kat*. Jess filters these far-flung references through a self-described Romantic sensibility, one that values the transforming power of the imagination above all else.

The Tibor de Nagy Gallery is the exclusive representative of the Jess Estate. Its Jess survey exhibition in 2008 was chosen for an AICA award for Best New York Gallery Exhibition during the 2007-2008 season.

A published catalogue, as well as an online version, are available with an essay by Michael Duncan.

**For further information and visuals please contact 212.262.5050.**