

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



Yasumasa Morimura

Los Nuevos Caprichos

January 22 – February 26, 2005

Opening January 22, Luhring Augustine is pleased to present the most recent series of self-portraits by the Japanese artist Yasumasa Morimura which offer an unconventional homage to the work of Francisco de Goya. Morimura uses costumes, make up and props to photographically recreate Goya's series of etchings, *Los Caprichos*. These satirical photographs comment on the ills of contemporary society such as war, economic disparity, gender issues and malevolent gossip and superstition.

While staying with the Duchess of Alba during the Spanish Inquisition, Francisco de Goya created the 80 prints that comprise *Los Caprichos*. This was his first body of work created outside of the commission system in which he was allowed to work with complete freedom. He described the resulting prints as: "Capricious affairs which attempt to ridicule, to upbraid prejudice, imposture and hypocrisy and other evils which have been hallowed by time." This influential body of work opened the door for artists to use their work as a mouthpiece for social and political commentary.

Traditionally, Morimura has conceived of his work in a similar way, through simultaneously appropriating and subverting significant art historical masterpieces. Through his deconstruction of the notion of the "masterpiece," Morimura calls into question assumptions imparted on such works by Western documentation of art history, as well as commenting on Japan's absorption of Western culture. However, Morimura's interpretation and representation is particularly effective because while Morimura renegotiates the definition of masterpiece, he genuinely identifies with and respects the artists themselves. By inserting himself into the work, he recreates, relives and indulges in the artistic process. His ability to satirize and simultaneously create an homage is what enables his work to defy categorization.

Morimura has shown extensively in international solo exhibitions, and his work is in the following selected collections: The Rose Art Museum, Boston, The LA County Museum, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, The Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, The Modern Art Museum, Fort Worth, The Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, The Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

A catalogue of the exhibition will be available.

For more information, please contact Claudia Altman-Siegel at 212-206-9100 or look on our website www.luhringaugustine.com.