

# DIAZ CONTEMPORARY

Garry Neill Kennedy

*QUID PRO QUO* and *THE FOUR SEASONS*

13 October to 10 November 2012

Reception Saturday 13 October from 3 to 6

Diaz Contemporary is pleased to present an exhibition by Halifax-based artist, Garry Neill Kennedy. This will be the artist's first solo show with the gallery. *QUID PRO QUO* and *THE FOUR SEASONS* continue Kennedy's ambitious painting practice that has spanned over the past five decades.

*QUID PRO QUO* is the latest iteration of *Ethics 101*, Kennedy's ongoing series of wall painting installations. This latin phrase is often used to connote a trade of favours and the common English translation is 'a favour for a favour'. It can be perceived as an assurance of equality, that both parties are benefiting from a transaction, but can also be used to describe darker acts of blackmail or bribery.

Previous installments of *Ethics 101* include *AN EYE FOR AN EYE* at Museum London (London, ON), *TIT FOR TAT* at Owens Art Gallery (Sackville, NB) and *You Scratch My Back And I'll Scratch Yours* at Articule (Montreal, QC). Kennedy's use of familiar phrases that suggest ideas of exchange and cooperation explore how different forms of power are negotiated.

Kennedy's site-specific wall paintings have previously utilized '*Superstar Shadow*', his own variation of the superstar font type, which is commonly used in American naval and sports cultures. In this painting, *QUID PRO QUO*, Kennedy uses the typeface '*Chisel*', which is associated with permanence and monumentality. Kennedy's bold font choices straddle between abstraction and readability – or art and utility.

*THE FOUR SEASONS* is another critical investigation of art and language. Each of Kennedy's chipboard paintings is named after one of the four seasons: *Winter*, *Spring*, *Summer* and *Autumn*. The selection of colours for each 'season' is based upon the paint colour's trademarked name and their associative time of year. For example, '*Apple Blossom*', '*Easter Bonnet*' and '*Green Bud*' evoke visions of spring; '*Blizzard*', '*Icy Moat*' and '*Snow Princess*' are reminiscent of wintery impressions.

Garry Neill Kennedy is one of Canada's most prominent and pioneering contemporary artists. In addition to an extensive international exhibition history, Kennedy has also held the position of president of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design for twenty-three years (1967-1990), establishing NSCAD University as a forerunner in art education. Recently, MIT Press invited Kennedy to author a book, *The Last Art College, NSCAD (1968-1978)* that chronicles the first ten years of his presidency. The National Gallery of Canada Library also recently compiled and published *Garry Neill Kennedy, Printed Matter 1971-2009*. In 2003, Kennedy was a recipient of the Order of Canada and in 2004, was presented with the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts.

Kennedy has had recent solo exhibitions at Printed Matter in New York City, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia in Halifax, Pickled Art Centre in Beijing, Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art in Toronto and at the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver. His work can also be found in numerous public and private collections including: Vancouver Art Gallery, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Art Gallery of Ontario, the Museum of Modern Art (New York City), and the National Gallery of Canada.