

**For Immediate Release**

**Rackstraw Downes, New Paintings**

**Inaugural Exhibition at the Betty Cuninghams Gallery**

**Exhibition Dates:** September 23 - October 30, 2004

**Gallery Hours:** Tuesday-Saturday, 10 am to 6 pm.

**Opening:** Thursday, September 23, 2004, 6-8 PM

On Thursday, September 23, 2004, Betty Cuninghams will open a new space on the ground floor of 541 West 25th Street with the paintings of Rackstraw Downes. Cuninghams, a pioneer in the early days of SoHo, is reopening the Betty Cuninghams Gallery, which had made its mark as first Cuninghams Ward and then Betty Cuninghams Gallery at 94 Prince Street, from 1972 - 82. Following the close of her gallery, she continued as an art dealer joining the staff of two leading contemporary galleries: Hirschl & Adler Modern (1982-98) and Robert Miller Gallery (1998-2004), an interlude of approximately 22 years.

*I felt I had had enough experience under my belt to open several galleries. I actually only looked at one space and took it. It is a small mid-19th century building with wonderful proportions. Thanks to our designer, Andrew Ong, we were able to combine the old with the new and, I believe, achieve what I wanted which is a space that is timeless.*

The inaugural exhibition, Rackstraw Downes New Paintings, is comprised of approximately 30 paintings completed by Downes, from 1999 to the present, on site in Marfa (Texas), Snug Harbor Cultural Center (Staten Island), Liberty State Park (New Jersey), Millennium Park (New Jersey), and Harlem. Downes, a peripatetic artist who moves with the seasons, has exhibited in New York since the early 1970's. Devoid of narrative, politics or nostalgia, whether in a dark interior attic (as in the Snug Harbor paintings) or industrial views in the five canvases From Marfa to Presidio via the Rio Grid, 2003-2004, Downes locks the viewer into the full view, both in detail and scope, and then rivets the location to a specific time.

Within the last year, Downes has exhibited his drawings at the New York Studio School as well as six of his recent paintings at the Chinati Foundation, Marfa Texas. His work can be seen in the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, and elsewhere throughout the country, notably in the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, Maine, The Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. and the Museum of Modern Art, Fort Worth.

Downes has published two books of his own writings: In Relation to the Whole: Three Essays from Three Decades, 1973, 1981, and 1996. (New York: Edgewise Press, 2000) and Under the Gowanus and Razor-Wire Journal: The Making of Two Paintings, 5.9.99 - 11.15.99, New York: Turning the Head Press, 2000. In the spring

of 2005, a monograph on Rackstraw Downes will be released by Princeton University Press with essays by Robert Storr, Sanford Schwartz and Rackstraw Downes.

The current exhibition will continue through October 30, 2004 and is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with an essay by Jim Long.

For further information, complete biography, bibliography, photographs and/or catalogue, please contact the gallery  
via phone at **212 242-2772**  
or via e-mail: [info@bettycunninghamgallery.com](mailto:info@bettycunninghamgallery.com).

### **Next Exhibition**

**Joan Snyder: "Women Make Lists"**

November 4 through December 4, 2004

Opening Reception Thursday November 4, 6 – 8 pm