

Rodney Graham

DONALD YOUNG GALLERY

933 West Washington Boulevard

October 10–November 14

In his sixth solo show at this gallery, Canadian conceptualist Rodney Graham continues to curiously rework historical moments. *Rotary Psycho-Opticon* (all works 2008), a replica of a sculpture used by the band Black Sabbath, combines the illusory, dizzying effects of 1960s Op art with an acid-trip-inspired bicycle ride. The work comprises a ten-foot-tall slab of black-and-white aluminum printed with a dot pattern; one must push the pedals of the silver bicycle positioned behind the piece to activate a second sheet of star, swirl, and dot patterns that, when in motion, creates a pinwheel-like effect. This psychedelic piece references both the first LSD bicycle ride—taken in 1943 by Swiss chemist Dr. Albert Hofmann—and Graham's homage to that event, which appeared in his 2001 film installation *The Phonokinetoscope*. Nearby, the artist stacks music-equipment boxes with the artwork's title printed on the front, suggesting the portable nature of the work.

Dance!!!! comprises two painted chromogenic transparencies mounted in light boxes that recall Jeff Wall's works and depict three cowboys frozen in time. Here Graham extends his interest in impersonations of fictional characters; he deploys a range of chiaroscuro-like light-and-darks, as well as the gazes of the depicted men, to create a complex, triangular line of vision. He concurrently massages the title's pun: One cowboy sits atop a piano with a drawn gun pointed at the floor, shooting the ground beneath the feet of an older gentleman, played by Graham, who hops, presumably "dancing" to avoid the bullet. A third cowboy looks on, his eyes following the bullet to the floor. In another gallery, thirteen untitled abstract paintings are presented in flower-covered thick white frames. For example, in *Untitled (5)*, a black-outlined red arrow juts through the center of a clump of murky blue, yellow, green, and pink abstract forms, some of which are outlined in yellow or green. These pieces, while still appropriating midcentury motifs, successfully branch off from Graham's recent Morris Louis-inspired canvases.



Rodney Graham, *Dance!!!!*, 2008, two painted aluminum light boxes with transmounted chromogenic transparencies, 8' 11" x 11' 6" overall.