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Carl Palazzolo

A Personal History of Italian Film

Recent Paintings and Watercolors

November 12 – December 20, 1997

Tuesday-Saturday 10-6

This exhibition will present nine paintings and a group of related watercolors, recent works in the series “A Personal History of Italian Film” which has occupied Carl Palazzolo for several years. While a young painter in the late 1960’s, Palazzolo immersed himself in the films of Fellini, Visconti, Antonioni and others, and embraced a vocabulary of vivid and meaningful images. He believes in the power of film as a kind of literature for the twentieth century, and finds, for example that the frozen moment of Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg in the Trevi Fountain from the film *La Dolce Vita* is a touchstone of contemporary iconography.

Themes of desire, denial, sexuality and religion permeate this work. Memory itself – the content and the experience – has long been a recurrent theme for Carl Palazzolo, and weaving his memories of these films and that time of his life into his current work has enhanced the emotional richness of his paintings. Working from photographs, a library of related texts and images, along with his memories of the films themselves, Palazzolo populates his paintings with eyes, hands, figures, gestures and language drawn from these sources. A display of source material is presented at the entry to the exhibition.

While this golden era of Italian film has long been treasured, there is a widening interest in this work. The Museum of Modern Art is running a Luchino Visconti film retrospective beginning on November 21, and a three-hour documentary film of Marcello Mastroianni’s last interview ran to overflow audiences during the recent New York Film Festival.