

**Jim Long**

Curated by Rackstraw Downes

September 7 – October 14, 2006  
(Opening Reception: Thursday, September 7, 6-8pm)

“In these works, the normally conspicuous stamp of human decision making appears to be absent, and art making resembles a protracted natural process, like the formation of stalactites on the ceiling of a cave.”

—Rackstraw Downes

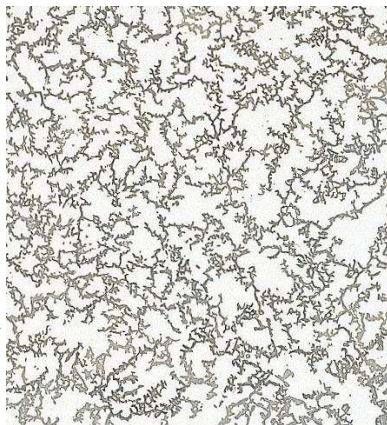
Jim Long’s fascination with the spatial constructs, which shape our perception of the natural world enables him to transform seemingly imperceptible events into densely orchestrated, monumental compositions.

In *For Jagannatha* (2003-2006), a grouping of four, oil on canvas paintings on view, tiny dark branch-like natural forms emanate outward from the center of each painting and collect at the edges to form intricate constellations. Patterns created by these massing forms take on elastic dimensions as figure and ground shift constantly. Yet, while apparently following the conventions of gestural painting, Long challenges its established languages and questions its assumptions.



Studio view of at left, *For Jagannatha 1*, 2003, Oil on canvas, 126" diameter; at right, *For Jagannatha 3*, 2004, Oil on canvas, 126" diameter. Photo credit: Jim Long

Long is drawn to the accidents, spills, and messes most people try to overlook. Since the late 1980’s, he has been interested in how painting can capture the implicit structure harbored within these impersonal materials. These investigations into the ways patterns evolve in nature also reflect an interest in chaos theory and space configuration. In the late 1980’s, Long began to combine incompatible materials such as oil paint and water, litho ink and rubbing alcohol onto paper, finding there was indeed an imbedded logic within the patterns produced. At the time, while studying South Indian drumming, he became aware of the tremendous variety of sound and vibrations, which existed within the middle ground of the rhythms played. The sheer range of tonal dexterity produced by these deceptively simple beats inspired him to further explore the spaces in between foreground and background in his painting.



*For Jagannatha 1*, (detail), 2003, Oil on canvas, 126" diameter, Photo credit: Kevin Noble

In 1991, Long began pouring paint directly onto water and found that the oil, when left alone, had formed interesting cartoon-like shapes, which existed in dimensions between two and three. He began capturing fragments of these patterns on small sections of paper, and later, transferred these detail sections into paintings. By dramatically enlarging the scale of his compositions, he was finally able to

(Cont.)

successfully render the fractal irregularity of the “classic mess,” which had eluded him years earlier.

The search for unconventional symmetries heightened by fluctuations of scale continues to inform his process. When faced with the challenge of transforming 13” mylar circles cast aside years ago into 10 ½ ft. paintings, the word Juggernaut came to mind. Loosely translated from a Sanskrit term for protector of all that moves, it aptly describes Long’s most recent paintings. For among the delicate layers of flat brushstrokes, there exists a colony teeming with activity.

*Catalogue available.*

#### **ARTIST’S BIO:**

Jim Long was born in Springfield, MA. In 1949, received a B.A. in Art History from Swarthmore College, and attended San Francisco Art Institute. He moved to New York City in 1976, and began exhibiting work in galleries and museums here and in Europe in 1981. He worked in set design and technical production for dance and theatre, and has taught for many years in the summer program of the Marie Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation. He is a contributing writer at the *Brooklyn Rail*.

#### **ABOUT CUE:**

CUE Art Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit arts organization, is dedicated to providing a comprehensive creative forum for contemporary art by supporting under-recognized artists via a multi-faceted mission spanning the realms of gallery exhibitions, public programming, professional development programs and arts-in-education.

CUE Art Foundation was established in June of 2002 with the aim of providing educational programs for young artists and aspiring art professionals in New York and from around the country. These programs draw on the unique community of artists, critics, and educators brought together by the Foundation’s season of exhibitions, public lectures, workshops, and its studio residency program: all are designed to be of lasting practical benefit to aspiring and under-recognized artists. The entire CUE identity is characterized by artistic quality, independent judgment and the discovery of genuine talent, and provides long-term benefits both for creative individuals associated with CUE and the larger art marketplace. Located in New York's Chelsea gallery district, CUE’s 4,500 square feet of gallery, studio and office space serves as the nexus for educational programs and exhibitions conducted by CUE.

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For additional information, please contact Kara Smith, Programs Assistant, CUE Art Foundation, 212-206-3583, or email [kara.smith@cueartfoundation.org](mailto:kara.smith@cueartfoundation.org). Gallery hours: Tues.-Sat., 10am-6pm.