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SERGE SOROKKO GALLERY PRESENTS "ASCENSION,"

NEW PAINTINGS BY RALPH RUCCI

Works on Display from December 15 through January 18, 2013

SAN FRANCISCO (November 26, 2012) -- Serge Sorokko Gallery announced today that it will exhibit American *haute couture* designer and celebrated visual artist Ralph Rucci's latest works, "Ralph Rucci: Ascension," from December 15 through January 18, 2013. This remarkable 30-piece collection of mixed media paintings on canvas will feature works created in 2011 and 2012. Gallery owners Serge and Tatiana Sorokko will host a private reception in his honor at the Serge Sorokko Gallery on December 14, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

"After five years of anticipation, we are elated to bring Ralph's extraordinary new paintings to the gallery," said Serge Sorokko. "In the years since his last exhibition, the world has seen the continual evolution in his exceptional fashion designs, and now we have an opportunity to see the same evolution in his pictorial work."

During his career as an internationally acclaimed fashion designer, Rucci has developed fabrics with luxury mills throughout Europe, using advances in technology to create new textiles, and by studying archives in order to revive historically important cloths. This has been a significant force for him as an artist, as his prints are based on his own paintings. He draws inspiration from art, as well, ranging from classic Renaissance works to those of contemporary masters such as Antoni Tàpies, Cy Twombly, and Francis Bacon.

Rucci's creative work synthesizes his interest in both expressionist and minimalist tendencies of post-war and contemporary art. His paintings, which often incorporate fabric collage, have a distinctive Japanese-inspired aesthetic. The results are often large-scale works that are simultaneously imposing and understated, with a delicately defined and unmistakable presence.

For the man who said he would be a psychiatrist if he were not designing clothes, creating art -- or "channeling," as he calls it -- is his preferred psychological release. While he likens his artistic process and the catharsis of creation to a great therapy session, Rucci says that painting is different and purer than fashion design because he allows himself "to be taken and fed into the canvas." As he describes it, "I discovered fashion as an artistic medium. Later in life, my trap door opened, and I found my ability as a painter - a fine artist - to be an extension of my psychiatric work. This is my future - melding the two arts."

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