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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Julian Schnabel
Navigation Drawings
8 January - 16 February 2008

Sperone Westwater is pleased to announce an exhibition of recent drawings by Julian Schnabel. Titled "Navigation Drawings," these works are painted in oil on found vintage nautical maps which are subsequently mounted onto stretched linen. Despite their intimate scale, these drawings suggest an expanding pictorial space. Rotating the map on its side or upside down, the artist releases its informational content to emphasize gesture and fluidity. Each stroke describes the speed and direction of its marking, and in this way, the drawings are as precise and as abstract as the maps onto which they are painted. The overall visual sensation is one of openness and light; one also detects a cinematic impulse to frame and focus the image.

In the catalogue published to accompany this exhibition David Moos writes: "Schnabel's work is rooted in exploring and trying to define the difference between epiphany and the commonplace. In his recent series of drawings on nautical maps this tension is articulated in direct terms. Often a single gesture or cluster of painterly forms depicts the painter's presence, a compressed or distilled essence...Through his treatment each map becomes a backdrop for events – pictorial events that he acts out, inviting narrative." ("Sounding in Fathoms: Julian Schnabel's Recent Navigation Drawings")

This gallery exhibition marks a long association between Julian Schnabel and Gian Enzo Sperone, who has shown the artist in Italy regularly since 1985. Recent solo exhibitions of the artist's work include "Summer: Julian Schnabel. Paintings 1978 - 2006" at the Palazzo Venezia in Rome which traveled to the Rotonda della Besana in Milan; a related show this fall at the Tabacalera in San Sebastian, Spain; and a survey exhibition in Beijing (The Beijing World Art Museum) and in Hong Kong (10 Chancery Lane Gallery). A group of new paintings was also shown over the summer at Schloss Derneburg in Germany.

A fully illustrated catalogue will be published on the occasion of "Navigation Drawings" with an essay by David Moos, Curator of Contemporary Art at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto.

For more information as well as photographic images, please contact Sperone Westwater at (212) 999-7337, or info@speronewestwater.com