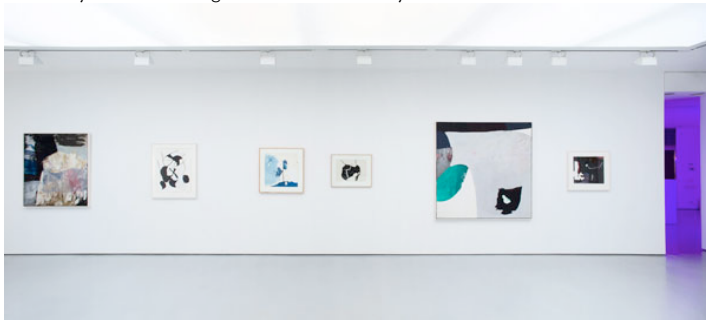


Unlikely Friends: JAMES BROOKS & DAN FLAVIN

GREENBERG VAN DOREN GALLERY | JANUARY 5 – FEBRUARY 18, 2012



Unlikely Friends: James Brooks & Dan Flavin, installation view, Greenberg Van Doren Gallery, New York.
Courtesy of Greenberg Van Doren Gallery, New York.



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While the interstitial concern between the two-dimensional work of James Brooks and Dan Flavin's fluorescent constructions is light and its perceptual characteristics, as well as the two artists' friendship and mutual respect, their procedures and chosen media could not be more divergent. One could argue that this exhibition, one that pairs luminous, warm abstractions and coldly machined industrial fixtures, provides a liminal art historical space between Abstract Expressionism and Minimalism, recalling Flavin's beginnings as an abstract painter identified within the locus of Brooks's generation. The phenomenological space between these two artists is registered at the threshold of the passageway between front and back rooms at Greenberg Van Doren. The front gallery, bathed in the phantasmagoric blue haze of Flavin's fluorescents, dissolves into the rear gallery's orange tungstens, which illuminate Brooks's meditative paintings and drawings. It is impossible to see both exhibitions at once, the eyes are incapable of perceiving both atmospheres of light in the same moment. There is no literal overlap of Flavin's light on Brooks's canvases, but rather, the suggestion in the mind's eye that the interplay of the two artists' influences will merge in a distant future. **GREG LINDQUIST**