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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"Red Sparrow", New Narrative Series of Paintings by Anna Conti

Anna L. Conti presents her newest epic series of narrative paintings "Red Sparrow" at Newmark Gallery San Francisco, Opening February 26th and running through March 31st, 2007. There will be a reception for the artist Thursday, March 1st at 6:00 PM.

Anna L. Conti is a well-known San Francisco figurative artist who has developed a profoundly allegorical and narrative approach to her work in the vein of Robert Bechtle and John Paul Turnage. This is Conti's second such group of paintings, following her acclaimed "Trickster Throws the Dice" series in 2003. "Red Sparrow" is an ambitious, visual narrative exploring Time, Space, Humanity and Death in a distinctly non-linear manner. Conti evokes poetry, mythology, science and archetypes even as she uses contemporary images and her own highly developed technique to present a whole and present sequence of events. Nevertheless, the precise story is entirely left to the viewer to tell and each painting stands on it's own as a complete work.

Anna L. Conti was born at Patuxent River Naval Air Station in Maryland and has lived all over the United States. Her art career as an illustrator began while she was in high school and she worked in commercial art for six years. By 1975 Conti became disillusioned with the commercial art field. She became interested in a more personally meaningful vocation and went into nursing. Almost two decades later, she retired from nursing to return to her creative beginnings. She has been painting full time as a fine artist since 1994.

Identifying as a realist, the subject matter in her paintings is recognizable and seems "photographic." She takes reference photographs in the initial stages of a painting, but her paintings are not simply copies of photographs. She uses both her training as an illustrator and computer technology to edit, compose and design the images. She then transfers the drawing using the traditional grid method and paints the line work in a deep red color. Her style is labor intensive and her process frequently involves over ten layers of semi-transparent acrylic paint mixed with glazing medium. This multi-layered process creates glowing color depth and luminosity even in mundane materials like cement. The patient craftsmanship of the work is immediately evident in her fine detail and rendering of texture.

Anna Conti's paintings are deeply influenced by her connection to her neighborhood (she's been living in the Sunset District since 1987) and her interest in myth and symbolism. Symbolism has always been a strong interest of hers and it is present on some level in every painting. However, intentionally subtle use of it ensures the paintings are accessible without knowledge of the symbolism.

Conti often works in series, spending a year or more focused on a particular concept. Currently she has been working on a series of paintings about urban "caves" such as local parking garages. Her previous series "Trickster Throws the Dice" was featured in a solo exhibit at the Hang Annex in 2004. She works in her studio full time. Once or twice a week

she goes out to paint and photograph San Francisco. She is active in the San Francisco art community and publishes a daily internet arts journal focused on life as a working artist and local art at www.bigcrow.com.

Newmark Gallery San Francisco is located at 251 Post Street, Suite 412 in the Union Square area of San Francisco. We are committed to representing the highest quality contemporary art from the Bay Area and Europe. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday 11 am - 6 pm and by appointment. Please view our website at www.newmarkgallery.com for more information and upcoming events.

If you would like more information on this topic, or to interview Mark Wladika, the gallery director, please email art@newmarkgallery.com or call 415.392.3692.