

LENNON, WEINBERG, INC.

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Harriet Korman

New Paintings

February 15 – March 17, 2001
Tuesday-Saturday 10-6

Harriet Korman (b. 1947) brings an abiding curiosity to the practice of painting. She has always been ready and willing to leave things behind in favor of possibilities that lie ahead. Korman has continually reinvented her work since the time of her earliest exhibitions of reductive white paintings in New York and Cologne in the 1970's. From the beginning, she has set certain guidelines for her working process, which largely determine the characteristics of the finished paintings. Modest adjustments of those groundrules over time have resulted in paintings dramatically different in appearance.

Her exhibitions at Lennon, Weinberg Gallery in 1992 and 1994 showed Korman working with a repertoire of swift gestures, additive layers and whitened colors. A monumental diptych exhibited in the 1995 Whitney Biennial represents the ultimate expression of that period of her work. At the time of her last show here in 1996, the mark-making and loosely gridded layers were still evident yet Korman sought further clarity in a palette limited to black and white. In a group exhibition here two years ago, she showed five small paintings, which suggested the changes in approach, which have come to fruition in the paintings of 1999 and 2000.

The new paintings are composed of bright colors and strong shapes, and are smaller than before. Korman has restricted gesture and eliminated line. White is used only as a color in itself. She describes several reasons why she brought these changes to her work - from looking at intensely colored Tibetan paintings to considering the pedestrian everydayness of color remembered from a trip to Mexico. She speaks of awe and wonder at the beauty of some recently purchased handmade paints and of small sections of Cezanne paintings from the exhibition in Philadelphia four years ago. She suggests that a reliance on white had gotten in the way, clouding her color choices. As she follows the thread from her early gesso paintings, to hardedge minimalist renditions on raw canvas, to her return to traditional oil paints on canvas through the black and white paintings of the mid-90's, Harriet Korman suggests that she brings to her work a consistency of thought and inquiry rather than of style or image.