

LENNON, WEINBERG, INC.

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Joan Mitchell

Paintings and Pastels 1973 to 1983

May 3 to June 21, 2008
Tuesday-Saturday 10-6



Untitled, 1978
21-1/2 x 17-1/2", pastel on paper

Joan Mitchell was a gifted painter. In her primary medium of oil paint, she created powerful and unforgettable works. Her paintings project an impressive physical energy and at monumental scale demonstrate the full measure of her ambitious goals. But oil paint was not her only medium; in addition to exploring etching and lithography, Mitchell embraced the medium of pastel and created a substantial body of work. This exhibition surveys her work in both paint and pastel between 1973 and 1983, a decade bracketed by two major cycles of paintings. During these years, a dynamic interaction between her paintings and pastels becomes increasingly apparent.

The exhibition will include nearly thirty works in both mediums. The paintings and drawings from the early and mid-1970s are atmospheric, and among them are two of the works in which Mitchell developed a composition in relation to a poem typed on the sheet of paper. During the next several years, she introduced an emphatic vertical mark into both pastels and paintings. In the exhibition are three pastels and one painting from the series titled *Tilleuls*, a group of works named for a mature and impressive linden tree that crowned the terrace of her home in the country outside of Paris. A brilliant yellow floats above hovering bands of blue in a large *Untitled* pastel from 1979.

In 1982, Mitchell produced a greater than usual number of small-scale paintings. A close look at the paintings of this period strongly suggests that she was seeking to achieve in oil paint a kind of light that resulted from bold juxtapositions of pastel pigments. The unprecedented and challenging color combinations of several series of paintings she titled *Gently*, *Merrily* and *Petit Matin* – green and orange, magenta and green, red and orange, yellow and pink – reflect the influence of her work in pastel. One of the six large paintings made that year is *Buckwheat*. Mitchell juxtaposed the heat of cadmium colors against cool cobalt and flashes of cerulean blue and established a shimmering radiance that clearly evokes her admiration for Van Gogh, and is titled in reference to his paintings of wheat fields.

This is the third exhibition of Joan Mitchell at Lennon, Weinberg. The most recent took place in 2002 at the time of the important retrospective exhibition of her work at the Whitney Museum. An illustrated catalog is available.



Chiendent, 1978
22 x 18-1/2", oil on canvas

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