

# LENNON, WEINBERG, INC.

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514 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10001 Tel. 212 941 0012 Fax. 212 929 3265  
info@lennonweinberg.com www.lennonweinberg.com

## The New York Times

Friday, May 23, 2008

JOAN MITCHELL  
Paintings and Pastels  
1973-1983  
Lennon, Weinberg  
514 West 25th Street, Chelsea  
Through June 21

Joan Mitchell's pastels, the subject of this small exhibition, rival her better-known oil paintings in bravura and complexity. Working during the late 1970s and early '80s at her studio in Vétheuil, France, she put an Abstract Expressionist spin on a medium more often associated with the French Impressionists. Ms. Mitchell used pastel to test out color combinations — magenta and green, black and violet blue — and to experiment, broadly, with gesture. Masses of vertical strokes reorient the conventional horizontal landscape, suggesting thick grasses or tightly clustered trees. The show includes two large-scale paintings, "Pour Patou" (1976) and "Buckwheat" (1982), but its best moments come from

the synergy between the smaller paintings and the pastels. Another pleasure is a set of drawings made in response to poems by J. J. Mitchell (no relation) and James Schuyler. One, from 1975, was inspired by Mr. Schuyler's poem "Sunset." The first lines read,

The sun just  
went behind the  
ridge and turned  
it mauve, marked  
green by firs,  
streaked white  
by birch.

The accompanying image is an uncharacteristically subdued blur, but Ms. Mitchell's later paintings and pastels take Mr. Schuyler's colorful imagery to heart.

KAREN ROSENBERG