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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXHIBITION: JOHN McCracken - SCULPTURE

DATES: May 3 - June 21, 1997

On May 3, the gallery will present sculptures by New Mexico-based artist John McCracken, from the late Eighties through 1997. This will be the artist's first one-person exhibition at the gallery, and in New York. Over the last two years, McCracken has had major solo shows in London, Basel, Los Angeles, Vienna, Munich and Paris

John McCracken's work was of crucial importance during the emergence of Minimalist art in the 1960's. While Minimalist artists such as Carl Andre, Donald Judd, and Dan Flavin were gaining ground with their work in New York, McCracken was experimenting in Los Angeles with a medium somewhere between sculpture and painting, in a parallel fashion. Sharing a focus on simplicity of form and content, as well as an emphasis on color, McCracken distinguished himself from the New York Minimalists by making color an integral element of the form itself.

Having started with painting, McCracken soon started to incorporate polished lacquered slots and insets into his canvases, resulting in a three-dimensional form of painting slowly developing into sculpture. Having materialized into different formal archetypes culminating into the plank form for which he has become known, his sculptures have always been characterized by a sense of individuality, turning them into single entities. Although they clearly relate to the physical world, they also refer to the unknown, to something beyond our sense and understanding of reality. The ambiguous relationship of his work with Minimalism becomes complicated by this outerworldliness; whereas McCracken's work is defined by a laborious craft, the Minimalists have

always emphasized the mechanical nature of their work. Despite the craft of McCracken's work however, the otherworldly character of his sculptures detach them from the labour and time involved in their actual production. This inherent ambiguity of McCracken's sculpture explains his fascination for the extra-terrestrial: he has described himself as a vehicle through which the unknown manifests a physical form, outside of the human world.

The unique quality of McCracken's work is characterized by this capacity to relate to the physical world, and transcend it at the same time. The often bold and extreme colors for which his sculptures have become known, are heightened and denied at the same time by the sculpture's reflective surfaces, that make the color, and with that the form, almost translucent, fluid and intangible. The sculptures then become mirrors to the physical world, as well as to the unknown world, and the outside forms seems to dissolve into the inner space of the work. This elusive and ambiguous quality becomes a pivotal theme to all his work, making his sculpture an extremely balanced and almost lyrical combination of opposites.

Please contact the gallery for further information at 212.966.9074