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EXHIBITION: TOBA KHEDOORI

DATES: October 17 - November 16, 2002
Opening reception: October 17, 6–8 PM

On October 17, the gallery will open an exhibition of new work by the Los Angeles-based artist Toba Khedoori. This will be the inaugural exhibition for the gallery's new space on 19th street in Chelsea, and the artist's third show with David Zwirner. Toba Khedoori, a recent recipient of a prestigious MacArthur grant of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, will also exhibit her work in "Drawing Now. Eight Propositions" at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, opening on October 16. Recent solo exhibitions of the artist's work were held at the Museum für Gegenwartskunst Basel and the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London.

Toba Khedoori's art is hybrid in nature, and locates itself between drawing, painting and installation. Made with oil paint on large sheets of wax-coated paper, Khedoori's work resonates first and foremost through its sheer monumentality. Ranging from 12 x 7 ft. to 12 x 30 ft., the artist's works tend to fill the entire field of vision. Often large parts of the wax-coated paper are left blank, underscoring that the images floating on Khedoori's work are supported by their own spatial reality, and not just by the gallery wall. In earlier work the imagery drew almost exclusively from architecture. Sometimes Khedoori would focus on architectural fragments, whereas in other works she would push the depicted structures into the realm of a Kafkaesque surreal. Common to all works was and is the complete absence of any human presence; Khedoori's structures and buildings never feel as if they are populated by people.

To date, all of Khedoori's work focused on man-made structures. A work from 2001, *Untitled (Horizon)*, shown at the Museum für Gegenwartskunst Basel last year, signaled a change which the artist continues into her present exhibition. Nature has been entering the work; not as landscape though but rather as an abstraction. In *Untitled (Horizon)*, Khedoori reduced the idea of a horizon to a simple bundling of horizontal lines, creating a sheer endless perspective. The works exhibited in her show at David Zwirner, expand on this theme. In *Untitled (Mountains)* Khedoori renders an aerial view of a mountain range in excruciating detail. The resulting landscape is not naturalistic, but rather reminiscent of a map. However, there is a curious absence of cities, rivers, lakes or roads on this map; the only thing to be seen are endlessly meandering mountains. This rugged landscape conveys a striking fragility from the vantage point the artist chooses. Even if this landscape were populated by people, they would be too small to be visible.

Although tremendously generous in scale and atmosphere, Khedoori's work is ultimately deeply private. A critic has called Khedoori's paintings "veiled labyrinths just visible enough to show that they are sealed, locked down." Khedoori's work conceals more than it reveals. Like so much meaningful art, Khedoori's work seems to take shape in the depths of the artist's subconscious. Only very few images make it through the idea state into the finished artwork. The simplicity of the resulting images certainly seems to invite a metaphorical reading, yet in the end, the meaning of Khedoori's work is destined to remain mysterious.

For further information, please contact the gallery at 212-727-2070.