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EXHIBITION: TOBA KHEDOORI Paintings

DATES: May 4 - June 15, 1996

Opening on Saturday, May 4th, the gallery will present the work of Los Angeles-based artist, Toba Khedoori. This will be the artist's first one-person exhibition in New York. Last year, her large-scale paintings were featured prominently at the 1995 Whitney Biennial.

Toba Khedoori works on large pieces of rolled out paper which are butted against each other and are stapled directly to the wall. The paper itself is treated with a thin coat of translucent wax which the artist scrapes meticulously to create a support for her images. The precisely rendered subjects are familiar and instantly recognizable: images of a train, a house, a chain link fence, an empty room are positioned relatively central on these sheets of white waxed paper. The scale of the work, some measuring up to 11 by 20 feet and the bluntness of these everyday objects demands further investigation: one tries to define the space around the object; to determine the scale of the object in relation to its real-life counterparts; to distinguish whether one is looking at a drawing or a painting and whether the work is finished or not.

Thus Toba Khedoori's works are full of contradictions, they slowly unravel in front of one's eyes the more one is trying to make sense of them. The objects in Khedoori's paintings have a disturbing urgency about them. The simplicity of the rendered objects stands in stark contrast to the interpretive possibilities and the uncertainty that it produces.

Collier Schorr writes in her catalogue essay on Toba Khedoori which accompanies this exhibition:

The isolation of a segment of space and time is at the foundation of Khedoori's work. Removing reason and replacing it with suspicion. Something is amiss. Huge structures sleepwalk aimlessly through a landscape of milky wax. Pieces of place, conjured up by buildings or vehicles, are severed from what connects them to us. News clippings without news. Precisely drafted facades missing something or other look real and fake, big and small, close-up and faraway. A shell-shocked IQ test where you don't see what's gone because your mind automatically fills in the blanks. Toba Khedoori's elegant and quasi-functional paintings tremble like Phantom Limb syndrome. It's there because you can't see it. You can't see it, all of it, but you can feel it.....These paintings of the most recognizable and prosaic monuments are a collection of Freudian slips waiting to occur. Dreams of missing teeth, fire hydrants and canons. They are not only in, but of a state of incompleteness, as if one part of each drawing is made in invisible ink. Like Robert Gober's Doors to nowhere, Khedoori's images are veiled labyrinths, just visible enough to show that they are sealed; locked down.

The accompanying full color catalogue with an essay by Collier Schorr will be available at the gallery. For further information, please contact the gallery at 212-966-9074.