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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:	October 17, 2003
EXHIBITION:	RAOUL DE KEYSER "Remnants"
DATES:	November 1 – December 6, 2003
GALLERY HOURS:	Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Opening on Saturday, November 1, the gallery will present new paintings by Belgian artist **Raoul De Keyser**. The exhibition, entitled *Remnants*, is the artist's second solo show at the gallery. In March 2004, a solo exhibition will open at the Whitechapel Gallery in London, which will travel to the Musée de Rochechouart, France; De Pont Foundation, Tilburg, the Netherlands; Fundaçao de Serralves, Porto, Portugal; and the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland.

Raoul de Keyser's work has been shown internationally since the early 1970's. It has received wider recognition since its inclusion in Documenta IX in 1992. A catalogue raisonné of the artist's paintings made between 1980 and 1999 was published in 2000 as an accompaniment to a traveling retrospective. Over the last decade, De Keyser's paintings were included in international group exhibitions such as: *Trouble Spot. Painting* (MuKHA, Antwerp, 1999); *Unbound. Possibilities in Painting* (Hayward Gallery, London, 1994); and *Der zerbrochene Spiegel. Positionen zur Malerei* (Kunsthalle, Vienna and Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, 1993). In 2001, the artist had an exhibition with Luc Tuymans at the SMAK, in Gent, Belgium.

De Keyser entitled his current exhibition of 14 new paintings *Remnants*. When pressed whether there is a literal meaning behind this title, De Keyser explains that he found remnants of a lino cut print in his studio that he had done 10 years ago. The organization and the re-organization of these linoleum fragments created a point of departure for this new series. Metaphorically however, the title *Remnants* takes on a more complex meaning when one looks at De Keyser's larger project.

De Keyser is a late bloomer. Born in 1930, this painter's painter only recently reached a broader international audience. Although De Keyser has flirted with figuration early in his career, the production of the last 25 years has been entirely abstract. Again and again he has investigated the possibilities of abstraction. However unlike the work of well-known colleagues such as Robert Ryman or Brice Marden, whose approach to abstraction is respectively analytical and spiritual, De Keyser's endeavor stands out for its very lack of any overriding rhetoric or dogma. A critic once said that it seems as if De Keyser approaches each painting as if it is the last work of abstract art to be made. Interestingly, while there is an ever-growing crop of figurative painters that have come to prominence in recent years, the world of abstract painting is one that seems to be shrinking. It appears that maybe, after all, the possibilities of abstraction are not unlimited. Perhaps De Keyser's new paintings investigate the remaining possibilities: the remnants.

Central to De Keyser's work, as to any painting for that matter, is the tension between figure and ground. In De Keyser's paintings, figure and ground receive equal status. The ground is applied deliberately, often creating flesh-like surfaces. The overlaying figures, lines, dots, and blurs certainly qualify as abstraction, yet within the logic of the composition they teeter on the verge of figuration. The paintings themselves remain light and airy, the brushwork always retains an air of spontaneity. De Keyser, unburdened by ideology or dogma, has created a privileged place for himself. With each new body of work, he can redefine his playing field. De Keyser has not painted himself into a corner; instead he continues to create new possibilities for himself, while expanding the language of abstraction.

The gallery has published a full-color, 36-page catalogue in conjunction with the exhibition. For further questions, please contact the gallery at 212 727 2070.