

Judy Ledgerwood: *Love, Power, Color*

September 13 – October 19, 2013

Opening Reception:
Friday, September 13, 5 – 7:30 pm



Judy Ledgerwood, *Crossing Over*, 2013
Acrylic, oil, and metallic oil on canvas, 96 x 80 inches

Judy Ledgerwood employs color to conjure a primary, visceral sensation in *Love, Power, Color*, her fourth solo exhibition with Rhona Hoffman Gallery. Ledgerwood presents five new large-scale (96 x 80 inches) paintings that border between object and architectural element. Over the past two decades, the Chicago-based artist has challenged traditions of Modernist painting through her use of scale, color, and decorative pattern. In recent years, Ledgerwood extended her practice beyond the canvas with wall paintings, highlighted in her 2011 show *Chromatic Patterns for Chicago* at Rhona Hoffman Gallery. The new works return to canvas yet disobey the traditional view of paintings as 2-D objects, infusing the gallery with color that expands optically and physically-chromatically.

A visual vibrancy created through specific color combinations, metallic paint, and other optical devices is often grounded with a replicated circular pattern in Ledgerwood's recent work. Followers will recognize the established structure, but also ascertain transgression of repetition. *Crossing Over's* hypnotizing chromatic patterning is interrupted in the canvas's lower section as the paint protrudes and hues shift.

A heightened palette in this body of work alludes to Ledgerwood's reflection on color's social and cultural implications. Two particular influences were a visit to India's *Holi Festival* of color and Michael Taussig's *What Color is the Sacred?*, an anthropological study of color's power and Western bias against it as belonging to "uncivilized nations and children" (Goethe). In *Weight of the Catch*, Ledgerwood chose Persian Rose, Indian Yellow, and Cinnabar Green specifically for the pigments' ancient roots and complex histories. In this way, with *Love, Power, Color* the painter folds social-political concerns in to her highly visually-minded practice.

Judy Ledgerwood has received numerous awards including the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Award and an Artadia Award. Her work is represented in public collections including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. She serves as the Director of Graduate Studies in Northwestern's Art Theory and Practice Department. Upcoming projects include an exhibition at the Graham Foundation and *Chromatic Patterns for the Smart Museum*, a site-specific wall installation for the Smart Museum's reception hall which will be on view December 2013-June 2014.