

# LENNON, WEINBERG, INC.

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514 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10001 Tel. 212 941 0012 Fax. 212 929 3265  
info@lennonweinberg.com www.lennonweinberg.com



## Denyse Thomasos

### The Divide: New Paintings

December 3, 2009 – January 9, 2010

**Tuesday-Saturday 10-6**

**Opening reception Thursday, December 3, 6-8 pm**

A decade has passed since Denyse Thomasos' last exhibition of paintings in New York. During that time, she has undertaken travel, photography and research that sharpened her focus and clarified her intent. She has sought to achieve a body of work that addresses her personal heritage as well as societal issues. Her paintings speak the language of abstraction but are derived from the architecture of her experience.

Thomasos' paintings typically project blocky spatial structures rendered with crosshatched grids that layer, intersect, and abut. As she stacks and skews them, she creates dynamic compositions that meld rural and agricultural environments with a modernist repertoire that suggest cities, airports and prisons. Color in her work is non-descriptive, graphic and contextually-neutral. She challenges the divide between abstraction and description in the new paintings and projects a sense of instability and flux. She works in acrylic rather than oil for the headlong pace it enables as she records layer over layer of plane and grid to create these hypothetical landscapes. There are echoes of dislocation or confinement, themes that have long been present in her work.

In a 2004 interview, Thomasos stated *I've been working on creating a language for myself, of mark and line and space, and I feel like I have that vocabulary now. Travel was really important because it is essential for me to connect to the world, to the places where a lot of my references come from... I think the hand will always rule in my work. The hand and the process, and seeing the hand in the process, will always be at the core. And that gesture will always be the gesture in space.*

The ten paintings in the exhibition reflect a return to the independence and privacy of the artist's studio, after a series of large-scale environmental wall-painting installations. These projects gave Thomasos the opportunity to explore the challenges of institutional spaces and public themes. *Scratch*, painted in black and grey on a hundred foot wall in 2001, was an urgently personal graffiti coded with historical reference and was followed by *Pigeoned*, a tightly organized work created for an exhibition curated by David Hammons in Vienna. Her most monumental installation project to date is called *Tracking* and took place in two parts. *Thirty Years in Canada, Thirty Years in Canada* and *Bombings, Wars and Genocide: A Six Months Journey from New York to China, Vietnam, Cambodia and Indonesia*. In 2005 she was commissioned by the Art Gallery of Ontario to create *Hybrid Nations*, a 12 x 45' wall painting that remained on view until 2008.

Thomasos was born in 1964 in Trinidad, a post-colonial island nation with a long history of exploitation, slavery and immigration. Her family left for Canada in 1970 and she has lived in the United States since receiving her MFA from Yale in 1989. She has received numerous grants and awards, and participated in many artist residencies and teaching programs. She is an associate professor of fine art at Rutgers University. She has traveled often and widely, particularly to Europe, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

**For additional information, contact Mary Benyo at 212 941 0012, [mary@lennonweinberg.com](mailto:mary@lennonweinberg.com)**