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LILI DUJOURIE

21 september - 24 November 2007

Tuesday to Saturday from 2 to 7 pm and by appointment

Opening Thursday 20 September 2007 6 - 9 pm

Erna Hecey Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by renowned Belgian artist Lili Dujourie.

With *Memories of Hands* Dujourie focuses on sensuality and material immediacy. The work consists of a series of six ceramic sculptures of subtle undulating forms placed on three tables and three shelves around the gallery. The elegant setting encourages a fluid movement throughout the space.

Each sculpture is unique, though they share a similar appearance; the pieces on the shelves have a dark gray glaze, while those on the tables have different finishes, natural, glazed, and oven-baked.

The artist's use of clay for the first time signals her interest in rethinking the question of sculpture today, after minimalism, formalism and abstraction: clay is a kind of return to the essence of things, the primal 'stuff' of creation, a fresh opening or beginning. Expressionistic and organic, *Memories of Hands* moves between the figurative and the abstract, suggesting the possibility of various objects, creatures or forms while remaining imaginatively pliable. Sculpture is here taken up anew as a passionate, hands-on process—sensible and conceptual.

The title evokes the idea of might be called 'haptic' intelligence (from the Greek *hapto*, to touch), in which thoughts and impressions belong not so much to the mind as the hands, a manual memory. In this sense, the work may be seen as an objectification of a lived process, the material trace of a corporal event: it's the body that knows and remembers, the hands that shape from out of their layered history.

Dujourie's notion of manual memory recalls sociologist Marcel Mauss's study of the 'techniques du corps' (bodily techniques), skills and gestures that are the sedimentation of a cultural tradition, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty's concept of the lived body or 'flesh of the world'. *Memories of Hands* stands for a non-theoretical knowledge, an embodied style of thinking, vital impressions of past experience that belong to one's flesh and blood.

Lili Dujourie is one of Belgium's most important artists. For over three decades she has charted an independent path in a variety of media, including sculpture, video, photography, and slide projection. Her work is known for its depth and poetic beauty.

Dujourie will be participating in a group show with Chantal Akerman and Francesca Woodman at the Tamayo Museum, Mexico City in October 2007, curated by Lynne Cooke. This past summer she showed in *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution* at MOCA in Los Angeles, and at Documenta 12.