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For Immediate Release:

Gianna Commito

February 27 - March 27, 2011

Opening Reception: Sunday, February 27, 6-8 pm

Rachel Uffner Gallery is pleased to present a show of new works by Gianna Commito. In her first solo exhibition at the gallery, Commito will show paintings that, while abstract, also look beyond their own geometric formal language to the world outside them – conveying the artist's interest in architectural space, the materiality of our everyday surroundings, and the productive process by which impressions and recollections are converted into images.

In her seminal study on urban planning, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jane Jacobs defined the exemplary public park as one that answers to the criteria of “intricacy, centrality, sunshine and enclosure.” Commito assumes Jacob's above definition along with all its attendant tensions – allowing her paintings to hover between stability and chaos, expansiveness and hemming in. While always offering a central, trustworthy axis, these paintings are also complex and unruly enough to unsettle. Their elaborate layering, startlingly affecting color schemes and uncertain relationship to perspectival depth slows down the viewer's perception, making the work less a pleasing pattern and more an immersive – though consistently slippery – experience.

Commito's paintings are meticulously rendered only at first glance; on a second, closer look, entropic slips and incidental glitches that happen along the process of their creation reveal themselves, making the work an unusual mixture of polished and dusty, vibrant and tatty. Commito explores the physicality of the traditional materials she uses – watercolor and casein on panels primed with marble dust ground – as a way to investigate weight, texture and temperature. The paintings' anti-monumental scale is also significant. Each of them is a relatable rectangle – somewhere between a window through which one could gaze, and an object that one might grasp.

Gianna Commito has exhibited her work at MoCA, Cleveland, Taxter and Spengemann, New York, The Drawing Center, New York, the Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, and William Busta Gallery, Cleveland, among other venues. She received her MFA from the University of Iowa, and is an assistant professor of painting at Kent State University, Ohio.

Image: Gianna Commito, *Bear*, 2011, watercolor, casein, and marble dust ground on panel, 24 x 30 inches, 61 x 76 cm

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