

Nancy Lorenz

OCTOBER 8–NOVEMBER 8, 2008

JAMES GRAHAM & SONS

32 EAST 67TH STREET NY 10065

Nancy Lorenz is working intensely on several pieces—all at once—for her upcoming New York exhibition. Showing them to me, she displays small moments of elation, as each one reveals itself to her anew. This is the natural result of her time-tested approach. She has a deep belief that materiality and process will take her someplace undiscovered. Or, alternately, someplace familiar—a place that she still didn't know she could get to.

Sometimes, she begins with an art historical allusion, as with her take on Bridget Riley's Op paintings of the 1960s. In Lorenz's translation, the undulating curved motifs of the original have been re-made as mother-of-pearl inlay, imbedded in an all-over field of silver-leaf, finally treated with a stippling black Sumi ink wash.

The results are a slowing of the viewing—as the re-constituted works are at the same time optical and tactile. Here, Riley's flash moment has been transferred, literally, into the future. The only thing is, the future now looks antique, or even baroque.

Lorenz says she is "revisiting geometry," whether in her interpretations of works by the German artists Joseph Albers and Wolfgang Ludwig, or in her adaptations of the calligraphic mark found in Japanese signage. In either case, she cites as influence the wabi-sabi notion of aesthetics, or the "rough played against the smooth."

Much of Lorenz's downtown Manhattan studio is devoted to materials and sources. An ad-hoc bookshelf holds *Ikebana: The Art of Arranging Flowers* by Shozo Sato, *The Art of Color* by Johannes Itten, *The Artist's Handbook of Materials and Techniques* by Ralph Mayer. A black-and-white photograph of a Buddha from Southern India is pinned to the wall nearby. Across the room, on a low table, several objects catch my eye: a severely shattered car mirror, mussel shells arranged as a palette for ink washes, brushes in endless varieties.

Lorenz's life altered radically, when, as a teen, her family moved to Tokyo. She was enrolled in The International School of the Sacred Heart, a Catholic school, in the late 1970s, where she and the other girls wore uniforms by day and went to the city's emerging new wave clubs by night. Traditional academy-style art courses in the figure were eclipsed by the larger influence of the cityscape. Lorenz recalls seeing the square floor vases at the Hotel Okura, which held Ikebana arrangements. At first, she says, they seemed "startlingly harsh." Five years later, by her leaving and passing through this same hotel, this aesthetic had become central to her developing art.

Now, for this show, we see icons of modernist architecture flattened to pictorial templates: Buckminster Fuller's designs for geodesic domes, Le Corbusier's chapel at Ronchamp, Giuseppe Terragni's Casa del Fascio. All of these give over to our age's fixation with image inventorying. Modernism, it seems, has become imbedded in us. For Lorenz, it's a psychological condition to be reflected against.

That also explains the use of mirrors. It's as if to say: Art can be a mirror. Should be a mirror. Of the artist's self. Or the viewer's self.

Lorenz is trying to transport her viewers to a personal place, a glimpse of where history meets present-tense consciousness.

—John Zinsser
New York City, Summer 2008

John Zinsser is a Brooklyn-based painter.

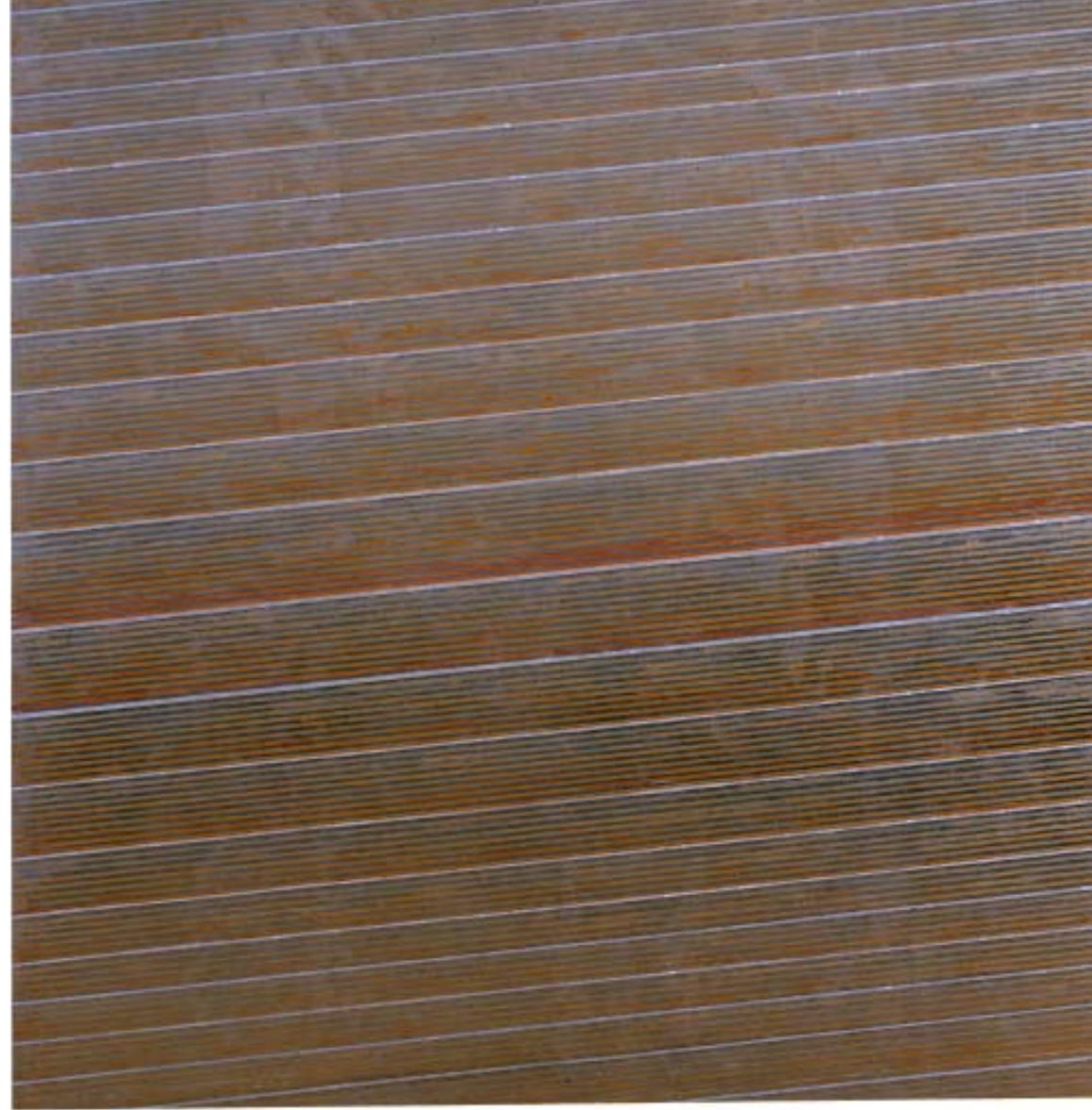




Gold Circle 2008 | gold leaf, gesso, on pine | 50 x 40"



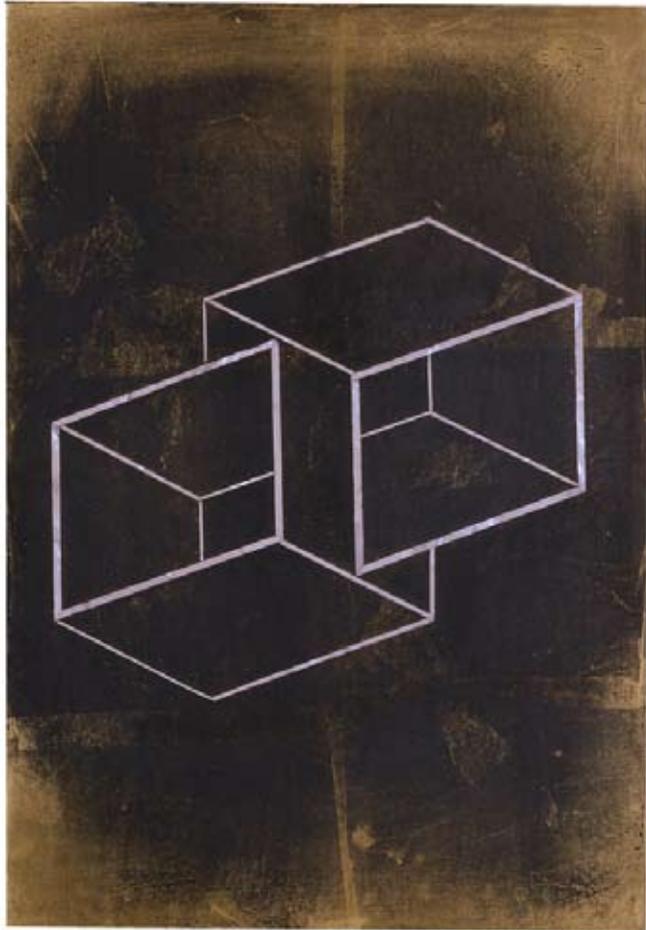
Geodesic II 2008 | gold leaf, black clay, mother of pearl, on panel | 24 x 24"



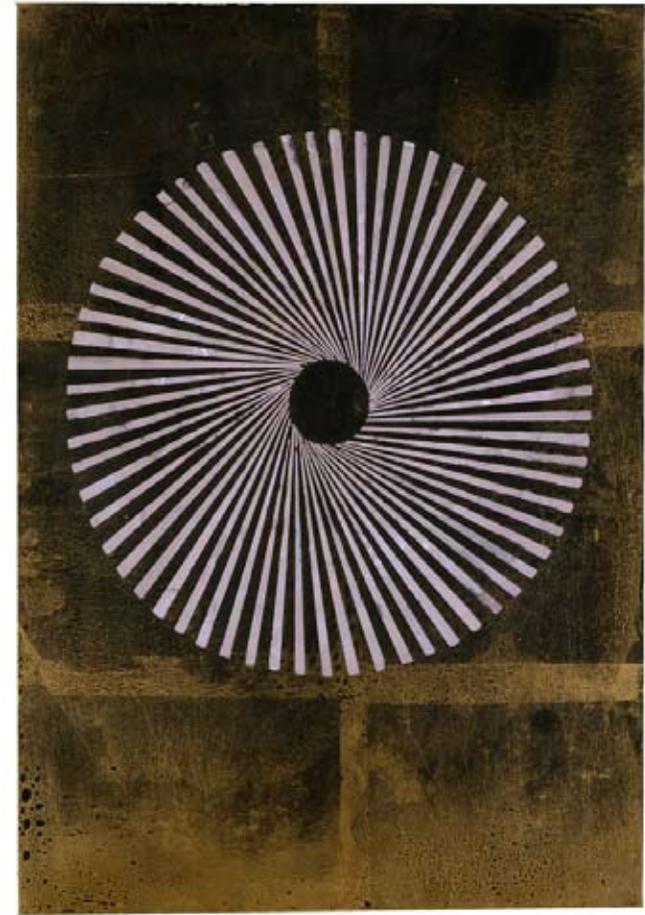




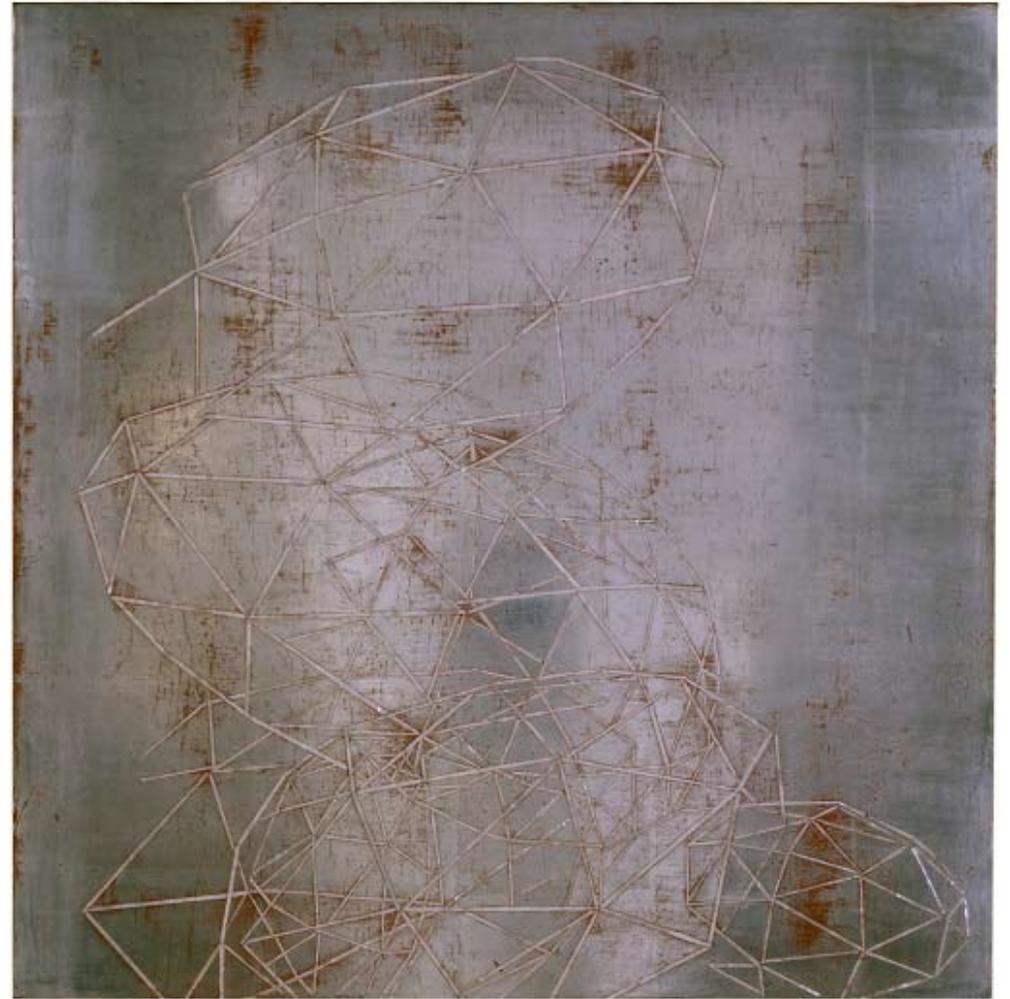
Silver Water 2008 | silver leaf, mother of pearl, sumi ink, black clay, on panel | 40 x 72"



After Albers 2008 | gold leaf, black clay, mother of pearl, on panel | 10 x 7"



After Ludwig 2008 | gold leaf, black clay, mother of pearl, on panel | 10 x 7"



LIST OF WORKS



Modern Architecture Studies 2007–2008
 mother of pearl, ivory lacquer, pigment, on panel
 dimensions vary: 8 x 10" to 4 x 6"

- Inside front cover**
- Geodesic** | 2008
 silver leaf, black clay, mother of pearl, on panel | 24 x 24"
- 5 **Gold Circle (detail)** | 2008
 gold leaf, gesso, on pine | 50 x 40"
- 7 **Gold Circle** | 2008
 gold leaf, gesso, on pine | 50 x 40"
- 9 **Geodesic II** | 2008
 gold leaf, black clay, mother of pearl, on panel | 24 x 24"
- 11 **Orange Evaporation** | 2007–2008
 silver leaf, red clay, mother of pearl, pigment, on panel | 60 x 60"
- 13 **Blackened Silver Pool** | 2008
 oxidized silver leaf, resin, clay, on mirror | 50 x 40"
- 14–15 **Silver Water** | 2008
 silver leaf, mother of pearl, sumi ink, black clay, on panel | 40 x 72"
- 16 **After Albers** | 2008
 gold leaf, black clay, mother of pearl, on panel | 10 x 7"
- 17 **After Ludwig** | 2008
 gold leaf, black clay, mother of pearl, on panel | 10 x 7"
- 19 **Geodesic III** | 2008
 silver leaf, red clay, mother of pearl, on panel | 24 x 24"
- 20 **Modern Architecture Studies** | 2007–2008
 mother of pearl, ivory lacquer, pigment, on panel
 dimensions vary: 8 x 10" to 4 x 6"
- 22 **Geodesic IV (detail)** | 2008
 gold and silver leaf, black clay, mother of pearl, on panel | 24 x 24"
- Inside back cover**
- Silver Water (detail)** | 2008
 silver leaf, mother of pearl, sumi ink, black clay, on panel | 40 x 72"

Nancy Lorenz

EDUCATION

Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia & Rome, Italy, MFA, Painting, 1988.
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, BFA, Painting & Printmaking, 1985.
International School of the Sacred Heart, Tokyo, Japan, 1976–1981.

AWARDS

John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, 1998.
Cill Rialaig Artists Residency, Ireland, 2008.

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

[hotels, other public collections]

Groupe Alain Ducasse, New York, NY
The Beverly Hilton Hotel,
Los Angeles, CA
Champion International Corporation,
Hamilton, OH
Gucci Tower, Tokyo, Japan
Gucci Tower, Hong Kong, China
Louis Vuitton, Tokyo, Japan
Thomas Maier, Bottega Veneta,
New York, NY
Mandarin Oriental Hotel, New York, NY
MIA Insurance, San Francisco, CA
Miyako, Hotel, Osaka, Japan
Muscat Hotel, Muscat, Oman
The New York Public Library,
New York, NY
Oregon Health and Science
University Hospital, Portland, OR
Peninsula Hotel, New York, NY
Republic Bank of Houston, TX
San Diego State University, CA
Mulia Senayan Hotel, Jakarta,
Indonesia
The Portman Ritz-Carlton,
Shanghai, China
Soho Grand Hotel, New York, NY
Solomon Brothers, New York, NY
U.S. Consulate, Istanbul, Turkey
Yokohama Hotel, Yokohama, Japan

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Mariska Hargitay
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Elton John
Rachel Kohler
Nathan Lane
Chahan Minassian
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Thomas O'Brien
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Bill Sofield



JAMES GRAHAM & SONS

32 EAST 67TH STREET NY 10065

tel: 212.535.5767

fax: 212.794.2454

jamesgrahamandsons.com

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