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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Susan Rothenberg

8 September – 29 October 2011

Sperone Westwater is pleased to present an exhibition of thirteen new paintings by Susan Rothenberg, the artist's tenth solo show at the gallery since 1987. Rothenberg continues to challenge and extend painterly conventions in her spatial and distorted compositions as well as in her exploration of light, color, form and movement. The works feature fragments of the human body, such as heads and hands, along with imagery of dogs and ravens. Juxtaposed against minimal yet heavily worked backgrounds, parts and partial figures are dispersed across the picture planes or cropped at the edge of the canvases. Bodies become shapes, and the tension between figuration and abstraction is heightened.

Rothenberg's first solo exhibition at 112 Greene Street in 1975, consisting of three large-scale paintings of horses, was heralded for introducing imagery into minimalist abstraction and bringing a new sensitivity to figuration. For this show, Rothenberg continues to use animals as surrogates for the human body, transforming the representation of the figure into a study of space and form.

The silhouette of a black bird with its beak open in, *Raven* (2009-10), dominates the height of the painting. The raven is slightly off-center and juxtaposed against a white, scumbled background. In *Ring Necks, Covering* (2011), Rothenberg paints two doves at the edge of the canvas, perched on branches that extend into the picture plane, bisecting it diagonally.

White on White Head (2009-10) depicts the profile of a large head outlined in grey and black paint. As in many Rothenberg paintings, figurative and abstract elements merge in the compositional space, leaving little room for a narrative. In the large-scale work *Strangers in the Night* (2009-10), two disembodied heads share a dark, layered background.

Since 1975, the artist has had numerous solo exhibitions in the United States and abroad. Her work is in the collections of over forty major public institutions worldwide. Important solo exhibitions include a retrospective organized by the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo that traveled to the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D.C.; The Saint Louis Art Museum; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Seattle Art Museum; and the Dallas Museum of Art (1992-1994); a retrospective at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in Monterrey, Mexico (1996); "Susan Rothenberg: Paintings from the 90's" at The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (1999); and an exhibition of paintings and drawings at the Museum of Art at Cornell University that traveled to The Contemporary Museum in Honolulu and the Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe (1998-99). The most recent survey, "Moving in Place", was organized by Michael Auping, Chief Curator at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, and traveled to the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe, New Mexico and the Miami Art Museum (2009 – 2011).

There will be an opening reception for the artist from 6 to 8 pm on 8 September. A catalogue with full-page color reproductions of the new paintings, images of the artist's New Mexico studio, and installation views of the previous nine gallery exhibitions, along with a contribution by Robert Storr, Dean of the Yale University School of Art, accompanies the exhibition. For more information and images, please contact Maryse Brand at (212) 999-7337 or maryse@speronewestwater.com. Please find further documentation on our website www.speronewestwater.com.