

# LUISE ROSS GALLERY

For Immediate Release

## **John Himmelfarb**

### *Ideographic Sequence*

John Himmelfarb started “making marks” in college, experimenting with a new pen “to see what it could do.” Soon he was doing drawings that were a play on the alphabet: extrapolating, expanding, decorating letters, and dividing them up into grids, columns and rows, suggestive of writing. Long after graduating from school--and the Rapidograph pen—he is still at it.

This first show for the artist at Luise Ross Gallery is comprised of paintings, prints, drawings and sculpture from 1979 to the present. All are based on the nascent mark making, the integral thread that runs through the evolution of Himmelfarb’s philosophical and artistic preoccupation with calligraphic abstraction. His use of line is key to the emotional communication between artist and viewer--perhaps more so even than between other visual artists and viewer--because the eye is challenged to “read” the texts visually rather than as information which has to be decoded. And this being said, in the more conventional use of the term artistic vocabulary, Himmelfarb’s use of layered colors in the paintings and prints is masterful. Wit, strength, and a touch of restlessness and ambiguity aptly describe the work in this exhibition.

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John Himmelfarb was born in Chicago in 1946, the son of two artists, Samuel and Eleanor Himmelfarb, and was raised in Illinois. He attended Harvard College and attended classes in two- and three-dimensional art, drawing, and learned basic etching in independent study. He returned to Chicago in 1970, started making prints, worked in ceramics and sculpture, and except for a brief period working in lithography in New York, continues to reside in Chicago. His work is represented in more than fifty public collections and has had seventy solo exhibitions. This is his tenth solo show in New York.

**Title: John Himmelfarb: Ideographic Sequence**

**Dates: 6 September – 20 October 2007**

**Opening: Thursday 4 October 5-7 pm**

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