

# JOHN BERGGRUEN GALLERY

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Clare Kirkconnell**

*Looking Up*

**May 20 – June 28, 2008**

**John Berggruen Gallery** is pleased to present an exhibition of new paintings by California-based artist, Clare Kirkconnell. This exhibition opens May 20<sup>th</sup> and continues through June 28<sup>th</sup>. John Berggruen Gallery will host an opening reception for the artist on Tuesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> between 5:30 and 7:30pm. This is Kirkconnell's second solo show at John Berggruen Gallery.

In this exhibition of twenty new oil on canvas works, Kirkconnell devotes her exclusive focus to and presents the observer with her personal view of the sky, in various states of day and night and often populated by flocks of birds. These paintings evoke moments of peace and serenity, and upon closer inspection also show a considerable amount of order and reason. Kirkconnell states, "Some of the paintings are more improvisational than others. The graphed pieces represent a sense of order. They are an homage to a cyber world that is becoming more and more a part of our lives. In fact, all of the paintings are influenced by the graph. For some, it is prevalent and on the surface, in others, it remains hidden." Often times the viewer is shown a distant world, one where they become onlookers into scenes that exist outside of their realm. Kirkconnell paints with a subdued palette - as evidenced in paintings such as *Three Birds*, *Two Lines* - which serves to heighten the viewer's feeling of isolation. The medium in which she works also underscores the elusive yet comforting quality of her paintings. Her method is sometimes vigorous and very involved. "My painting process consists of applying many thin layers onto a horizontal canvas. In this phase, very little is planned. The layers are applied one by one, with oozing and mixing and pooling, encouraged. At a certain point, I feel the urge to go 'vertical'. It is then, that I begin to allow my chosen theme (in this case, sky), to dictate direction."

Born in Brownsville, Texas in 1955, Clare Kirkconnell developed her interest in the arts early on and continued her education at Palomar College in San Marcos, California. After college, Clare spent several years as a fashion model traveling the world from bases in New York and Paris. She also studied acting and landed several film and television roles, including a three year run as the female lead in the highly acclaimed drama; *The Paper Chase*. Never abandoning her interest in painting, Clare continued her studies in 1990 at Santa Monica College and Otis Parsons School of Design. Her work has been consistently well received and can be found in many private collections, including the American Embassy in Kuwait. Additionally her work debuted at Art Basel Miami Beach in 2003 and she has been included in several group shows at the Napa Valley Museum.

For further information and photographs, please contact Tamar Nahmias (415) 781.4629 or [tamar@berggruen.com](mailto:tamar@berggruen.com)

**Gallery hours: Monday - Friday: 9:30-5:30pm, Saturday: 10:30 – 5pm**

