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PRESS RELEASE

exhibition: **Jan Schoonhoven: Drawings**
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Peter Freeman, Inc. is pleased to present an exhibition of drawings by the Dutch artist Jan Schoonhoven (1914 - 1994). The artist's first solo show in the United States in over ten years, the exhibition is comprised of thirty-seven drawings done between 1974 and 1991.

Schoonhoven made drawings throughout his career. His drawings were a counterpoint to the cardboard relief works; the drawings were not preparations for the reliefs, but a parallel exploration. With a few early exceptions his drawings (variously ink, pencil, pen, and gouache) are rectangular, vertical, and consistent in their modest scale of approximately 20 x 13 inches (50 x 32.5 cm). This exhibition will also feature two rare larger drawings, of which fewer than ten were ever made.

Jan Schoonhoven studied at the Royal Academy of Fine Art, The Hague, from 1930 - 34. His early drawings in the 1940s and early 1950s depict abstract forms and fantastical figures evocative of the work of Paul Klee. Schoonhoven's first wood and *papier maché* reliefs mimic the geometric hieroglyphs of his early drawings.

In the late 1950s Schoonhoven joined the Dutch Informel group. With artists Armando, Kees van Bohemen, Jan Henderikse, and Henk Peeters, the group's quest for objectivity was a decisive shift from the spontaneity and subjectivity the previous generation sought to visualize. In 1960 Schoonhoven co-founded Nul, again with Armando, Jan Hendrikse, and Henk Peeters. Nul was the Dutch counterpart to the German ZERO group, founded by Otto Peine and Heinz Mack, and including members Piero Manzoni, Luciano Fontana, and Yves Klein. Both groups sought to return to a pure beginning, from which there would be endless possibilities. Schoonhoven's sculptures of this period, made from white painted wood, cardboard, and paper, are repetitive, gridded, low reliefs. The rigorously structured white planes are softened by the handmade quality of their materials and animated by their own shadows. To a similar end, his drawings are made of repetitive gouache or ink hatch marks sometimes enlivened by gestural applications.

Most of the drawings in this exhibition are from the period after Schoonhoven's retirement from the Dutch State Postal Authority in 1976 where he worked full-time for 30 years. His drawings of this period, while still rigidly structured in method became significantly less repetitive in gesture. Many of these later drawings diverge wildly in application of line and mark.

Jan Schoonhoven was born in Delft, where he died in 1994. His work is in the permanent collections of many international museums including, The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate, London; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; and Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

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