

PETER FREEMAN, INC.    140 GRAND STREET    NEW YORK    NEW YORK    10013

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

exhibition:    Catherine Murphy: Recent Work  
date:    14 March - 27 April 2013

Peter Freeman, Inc. is pleased to present an exhibition of recent paintings and drawings by Catherine Murphy, the artist's first solo show in New York since 2008, and her inaugural exhibition with the gallery.

Always recognized as a representational artist of exceptional skill, Murphy's drawings and paintings were originally part of a conversation amongst figurative painters in the 60s who were working to broaden an understanding of the nature of representation. She has always challenged the viewer's point of view, focusing on surrounding subjects or objects, though defying what we might expect from the familiar. While in many works from the 1970s and 80s, Murphy depicted subjects from a distance, at the start of the 1990s Murphy began to manipulate both scale and focus, often shortening the distance between the image and the viewer, and with more extreme cropping of images questioning the way both how we look at the world and how it is presented to us.

Murphy's newest paintings and drawings show a profound interest in depicting common surroundings that usually escape our notice but nevertheless influence our perception: a pile of dust, a hole in the ground, or the stains found on a wall shift views usually unseen to become images that demand our full attention. Murphy does not work from photographs but, instead, directly from objects staged in her studio to recreate mental images drawn from memory and dreams. Her practice requires intense dedication to each work, a prolonged process that can take months, sometimes even years. The choice between drawing or painting is, as the artist explains, determined by the subject itself, giving painting and drawing the same importance within the artist's oeuvre.

Murphy's newest work continues her interest in decoding reality as a place of constant and inevitable change. Her depiction of an immediate, often intimate moment, or an object's presence, transforms our way of looking, and often leads to an abstract idea in spite of the precision of her imagery. A half-empty box of chocolates, a polka-dotted dress seen from an unusual point of view, or part of her own paint-splattered studio floor, Murphy's paintings and drawings remind us that every moment and every thing is affected by constant change and that, finally, we are also subject to such inevitable change. It is this understanding of perception as a matter in perpetual transformation that separates her work from many representational or realist artists, and positions her practice closer to those working in the parameters of conceptual art.

Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1946, Murphy studied at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine and received a BFA from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn in 1967, where she was also awarded an honorary doctorate degree in 2006. Murphy has also been distinguished with National Endowment for the Arts Grants (1979 and 1989), a Guggenheim Fellowship (1982) and as a member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters (2002). She was a Senior Critic at Yale University Graduate School of Art for 22 years and is currently the Tepper Family Endowed Chair in Visual Arts at the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University. Catherine Murphy's work has been the focus of museum exhibitions, from her first in 1976 to an upcoming exhibition at the Byrdcliffe Kleinert/James Center for the Arts in Woodstock, New York. Works by Murphy are present in important private and public collections, including Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Thomas Olbricht Collection, Berlin. The artist currently lives and works in Poughkeepsie, New York.

A reception for the artist will be held on Thursday, 14 March from 6 to 8 pm at 140 Grand Street. For reproduction requests or general inquiries, please contact the gallery at 212-966-5154 or [info@peterfreemaninc.com](mailto:info@peterfreemaninc.com).

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