

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

The New York Times

Richard Serra

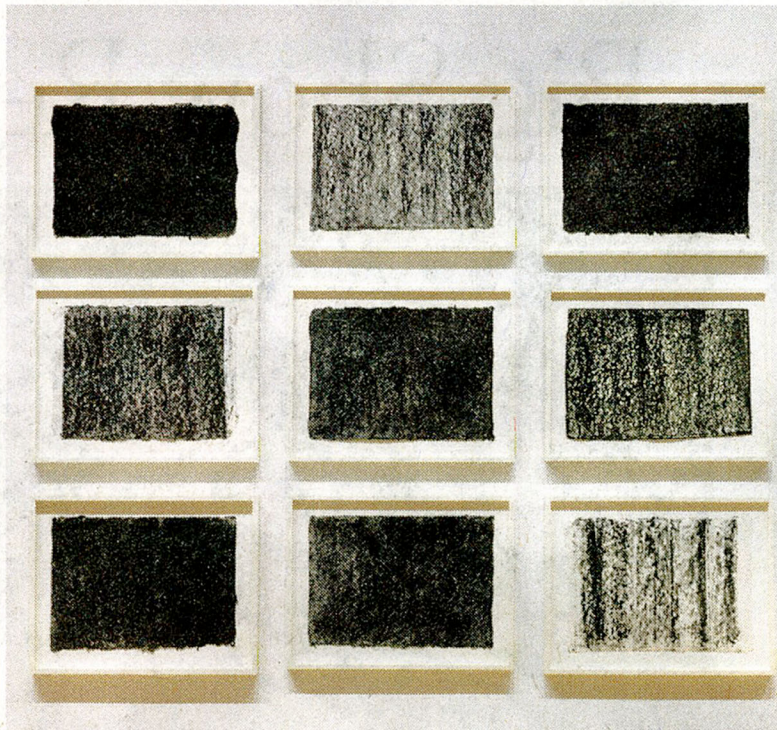
'Ramble Drawings'

Gagosian
980 Madison Avenue, Manhattan
Through Oct. 24

Richard Serra's "Equal," a room-size sculpture installation at David Zwirner in Chelsea last summer, was among the year's best shows. Now he's making a splash at Gagosian, his principal representative, with a series of 60 new drawings. In them, Mr. Serra takes that medium someplace he hasn't before, toward gentleness and modest size.

In the past Mr. Serra's large rough-surfaced drawings of thickly applied (black) lithography crayon have waged an unevenly match battle in terms of scale, weight and aggressiveness with his looming sculptures.

For his new "Ramble Drawings" — named after the sculpture series he was working on at the time — Mr. Serra has scaled things way down, applied lithography crayon in terms of ounces, not pounds and sometimes added black pastel powder. The



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paper is handmade, so each piece is a slightly different size. The variety of surface, space, light and touch is extraordinary

as are the fluid associations with nature and other artists (Seurat, Pollock, Barnett Newman, Vija Celmins).

Several works from Richard Serra's "Ramble Drawings," at Gagosian.

The drawings are made by two methods with varying degrees of control: some result from a two-sheet pressure-transfer process involving a metal tool whose traces inflect the composition while others use direct marking on a single sheet, a more old-fashioned way.

Mr. Serra remains, after all these years, the Process artist par excellence. The series echoes his famous "Verb List" (1967-68), which compiled different ways to manipulate materials. Now adjectives are compiled by us as well: look: dense, atmospheric, flecked, porous, arboreal, lunar, glimmering, cascading, photographic, matte, shiny. We stretch our vocabularies, as Mr. Serra brings another side of his rigorous sensibility into view.
ROBERTA SMITH