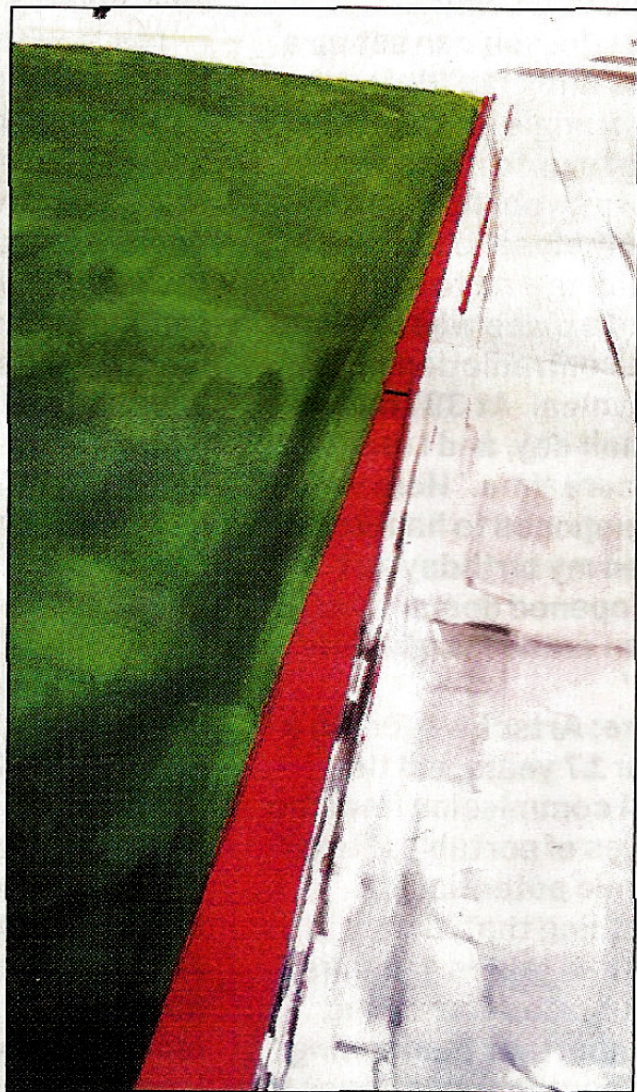


Koen van den Broek

White Cube West End

A form that appears to recede in space divides each of Koen van den Broek's 'Border' paintings. It acts as a stabilising device and, less comforting, as an intimation of what lies beyond. 'Blue Border' could almost be the view looking up from the bottom of a skyscraper when, in fact, it is a curb stone. Traversed by a thin line like a crack in the pavement, the blockish shape makes its way from bottom left through besmirched whiteness to end abruptly a few inches short of the top right of the canvas. This short journey is an unsettling one, a road to nowhere. 'Red Border' follows a similar course. Edging a scrubbed-in lime-green area, it acts more definitively as a boundary between lawn and pathway. 'Yellow and Red Border' is an almost vertical band; misregistered colour makes it appear shrouded lower down while hovering above ground further up.

It's a wonderful series, a simple yet rigorous creation of pictorial zones that inevitably leads one to think of boundaries and territories in a wider sense. Humble in origin but aspiring to high-modernist abstraction, the Belgian's paintings remind me of Richard Diebenkorn's late 'Ocean Park' series. Instead of the warm light of the West Coast, though, van den Broek fills his images with a solemn



Northern European greyness – despite the bright colours he sometimes uses. Infecting the lofty and formal with earthly uncertainty is nothing new; here, though, it is achieved with rare brevity and a keen sense of mystery. *Martin Coomer*

Coomer, Martin. "Koen van den Broek: White Cube West End," Time Out, London, December 12-19, 2001, p. 66

FRIEDMAN BENDA 515 W 26TH STREET NEW YORK NY 10001
FRIEDMANBENDA.COM TELEPHONE 212 239 8700 FAX 212 239 8760