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## ART REVIEW

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Herald Art Critic

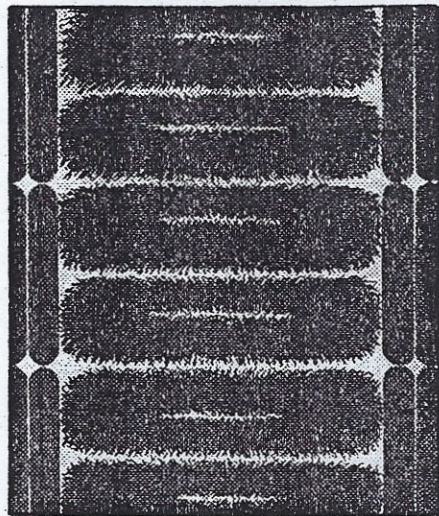
### Joan Witek

There is another winning show in a Miami-Dade Community College art gallery, this one on the Kendall campus. *Joan Witek: Paintings and Drawings, 1970s-1990s* is one of those exhibitions that makes you wonder how the art world picks its stars, and why some — like Witek — never get to be a household name.

All the works in this emotionally charged show are black and white, and every one is unique and superb. Witek came of age in the days of black painting — Richard Serra, Frank Stella and Ellsworth Kelly were obvious models. Yet she is no copycat. Her use of the grid as underlying structure, her unexpected choice of the oval over more common geometric forms, her manner of finishing off a work with graphite powder create patterns that are distinctively her own.

Witek's is an Agnes Martin sensibility without benefit of pleasing pastel color. Though exquisitely crafted, these works give off a spiritual aura, as if they were holy images. The paintings, frontal and symmetrical, have the intensity of icons, which is one of the reasons they stay with you so long. But the question posed at the beginning of this review — why does Witek's fame lag behind that of more pedestrian artists? — remains a puzzle. She is first-rate.

**Joan Witek: Paintings and Drawings, 1970s-1990s** can be seen through Dec. 10 at the Kendall Campus Art Gallery, Miami-Dade Community College, 11011 SW 104th St., Miami. Gallery hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Thursday and Friday, noon to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday. Admission is free. Call 237-2322.



**SLEEPING BEAUTY:** From Joan Witek show at Kendall campus.