

»Paintings are the moon in a dew drop – a reflection of everything.
I think humankind will no longer exist when there are no more
paintings.« Harriet Korman

PRESS RELEASE

Harriet Korman

»Developing Format – Paintings and Drawings 2010-2014«

Opening: Thursday, March 19, 2015, 6 – 9 pm

Duration: until May 23, 2015

Häusler Contemporary proudly presents for the first time works by American painter Harriet Korman (*1947, lives in New York). This exciting artist who found her way of handling color and form in the 1960s when she was a student of Richard Serra is yet to be rediscovered in Europe. At her first solo exhibition at Häusler Contemporary Harriet Korman shows recent paintings of the past four years as well as an exclusive selection of rarely seen oil crayon drawings.

Saturated, strong colors emanate from the geometrically structured paintings of Harriet Korman. The works on view selected from the past four years represent the current creative period of a painter that has been developing her work continuously over more than four decades. From the beginning of her career starting with her first exhibition at Galerie Ricke in Cologne 1970, Korman focused on abstract painting based on a few selected aspects. As a student of Richard Serra in New York of the 1960s, the artist established her individual approach. At that time, Abstract Expressionism still resonated throughout the art scene whereas Minimal and Pop Art opposed with new impulses. In between these poles, Korman adopted simplicity as her own prime principle. She dedicated herself to perpetually explore the picture plane at a time when others proclaimed the »abandoning of the picture«. In the past, her paintings thus assumed different qualities, at times very painterly, at other times dominated by organic forms. Currently, geometry and a mathematically based division of the canvas is most appropriate for expressing the artists principles.

There are several options for exploring the works in our exhibition. Only at first sight do they look severe, at the second and every further glance, they always provide surprises. First of all, there's the color that radiates from Harriet Korman's paintings in a peculiar clarity. The explanation for this phenomenon lies in the fact that Korman has not been mixing any white in her colors for more than 20 years now. So while looking at these paintings, the viewer faces color in its purest, most intense form, and mainly primary and secondary colors along with tones of brown. In some pictures, the paint application is very even, in other works the brush stroke is clearly visible which provides the paintings with depth and movement. The lines too are not totally straight, the guiding hand of the artist can be recognized and the supposed severity thus is eased again. There is another possibility in attending to these paintings: follow the lines and decipher the geometrical structure that underlies them. The

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structure of all works in the show starts out being symmetrical. In three works of 2013 it is a centered diamond, in other pieces created between 2010 and 2012 diagonals play an important role that cross subareas of the picture. The different resulting sections though are colored in such a way that the symmetry is repeatedly broken up, the viewer's eye is guided over the picture plane by different emphases and illuminations. »The less balanced a painting is, the more interesting it is«, the artist says.

This processual development of the painting can also be traced in the oil crayon drawings which the artist shows rarely in public and of which an exclusive selection is presented in our exhibition.

Deborah Keller, Häusler Contemporary

In Europe, Harriet Korman first showed her works in 1970 at Galerie Ricke in Cologne and 1977 at Galerie M in Bochum, along with Frank Stella. Several solo and group exhibitions followed in the USA. Recently, Korman was presented in several major surveys of Abstract Painting, for example »High Times, Hard Times: New York Painting 1967–1975« (diverse museums in the USA, Europe, and Mexico, 2006–2008) or »The Abstract Impulse: Fifty Years of Abstraction at the National Academy, 1956–2006« (National Academy Museum, New York, 2007). Her work was granted several awards, most recently the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in 2013. Since 1989 she has been teaching in the Art Department of the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York.

The New York Times wrote on the artist: »Partly by simply letting her hand show, Ms. Korman's new paintings expand on the implications of Josef Albers's nesting squares, attesting to the inexhaustibility of both color and geometry.« (Roberta Smith, 30.10.2014)

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