

Harriet Korman

New Work



Drawings in the artist's studio

February 24 - April 9, 2022

Thomas Erben Gallery is pleased to announce **Harriet Korman's** fourth showing with the gallery, which includes a solo presentation of her work at the 2021 edition of Art Basel Miami Beach. These new paintings and drawings are the latest result of a practice spanning more than 50 years. In Korman's words:

In this current series, I drew to find a form I wanted to work with. These drawings are not studies, I consider drawing to be an equal practice to painting and value them as such. While drawing, I chose a very simple, familiar form of concentric rectangles because it seemed like it would be an interesting challenge. I took that form into painting without referring to the drawings, and later used the drawings as sources for the paintings.

I try to capture the dynamic in the drawings; the color relationships, the proportions, the movement – what attracts me in the drawing, not copy it. This interpolation has many obstacles, pitfalls, inconsistencies and idiosyncrasies, but ultimately is very engaging.

This form provides a framework against which Korman mobilizes her choice of color, the material qualities of paint itself, and the precise nonchalance of her brushwork. The friction that results from this process is the source of the work's enigmatic allure, forming a space which only the eye (and the mind) can traverse. Form, for Korman, is more than just an aesthetic problem: it embodies the very substance of painting and the chimerical nature of art.

Cézanne once wrote, in a letter to Emile Bernard, that the "sole and unique aim" of his work as a painter was "the realization of that part of nature which, coming into our line of vision, gives the picture . . . the image of what we see." Far from a theory of art's subservience to nature, what Cézanne tries to articulate in this passage is a view of art arising from the same metaphysical substance as nature, partaking of the same vital essence.

For Cézanne, the task of the painter is to discover the liminal point at which the material components of painting dissolve into a vision. Similarly for Korman, painting "represents everything . . . an abstract illusion . . . an illusion of . . . thought."

Confronted with the vibrant presence of Korman's paintings, one gets the feeling that her work, despite its warmth and sensitivity – despite its aestheticism – harbors a challenge to the viewer, suggesting a field of meaning beyond perception of the forms at hand. More than just exhibiting an extreme formal inquiry, Korman's paintings administer a spiritual *shock*.

About the artist:

Thomas Erben Gallery has been working with **Harriet Korman** since 2018. Over the past few years, her work has received growing attention, garnering reviews from Roberta Smith for *The New York Times*, John Yau for *Hyperallergic*, and Raphael Rubinstein for *The Brooklyn Rail*, among many others.

This April, Korman will be included in a two-person show at **SITE131** in Dallas. Several of her paintings recently entered the **Kienzle Foundation** collection, and her work was included in the 30th anniversary exhibition at **Carlier Gebauer** this past November, curated by Dieter Schwarz (former director of the Kunstmuseum Winterthur). This interest builds on Korman's earlier exhibitions with Galerie **Rolf Ricke**, Cologne (1970, '71 and '72), **Galerie m**, Bochum (1977), and **Häusler Contemporary**, Munich (2015).

In the U.S., Korman has participated in the **Whitney Annual** (1972) and two **Whitney Biennials** (1973 and 1995), and was included in *High Times, Hard Times: New York Painting 1967-75* as well as a three person show at **MoMa PS1** (both 2007). Throughout her career, her work has received substantial critical support. She has shown extensively with such galleries as **112 Greene Street**, **Daniel Weinberg Gallery**, **Willard Gallery**, and **Lennon, Weinberg**, Inc.