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Giorgio Griffa: The 2000s

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Casey Kaplan is pleased to present *Giorgio Griffa: The 2000s*, a selection of seven paintings created between 2000 and 2021, in Gallery II. This exhibition marks the fifth iteration in a series of exhibitions focusing on the artist's practice by decade.

Since 1968, Giorgio Griffa's (b. 1936, Turin, Italy) work has been characterized by both repetitive and spontaneous sequences of marks and gestures. Brightly colored lines snake across raw, unstretched canvas; some ripple in waves, or tumble down like leaves, while others march like soldiers in regimented procession, or zig zag and careen like pinballs. Laid out like sheets on the floor, Griffa works freely across unprimed, unstretched raw canvas (made of linen, jute, hemp, or cotton), referring to them as "fragments of space" that serve as ground for his water-based acrylic paints, mixed thinly, that seep and bleed upon application. The paintings are exhibited unframed, pinned directly to the wall with small nails along their top edge, and when not displayed, are folded into sections and stacked, creating an embossed underlying grid for his compositions. The ritualistic act of folding and unfolding (re)activates the canvas with each viewing.

Held in tension with meditation and improvisation, the canvas is a study of the transitional space between the known and unknown worlds. The artist gropes in the dark for archaic truths; his proximity to the literal, rather than representative, is perhaps why Griffa rejects the term 'abstract.' As he has stated, "My painting is real." In the four different series - *Numerazione*, *Canone Aureo*, *Alter Ego*, and *Dilemma* - that dominate this exhibition, Griffa juxtaposes the science of representation with the philosophy of action painting, or the tension between the mathematics and language of linear perspective and the literal depiction of space and time through sequential actions recorded on canvas.

In *Numerazione* (2000), a series of stacked grey and bright pink diagonal lines are seen in juxtaposition with a grouping of uneven pale blue curved strokes. The numbers "2" and "3" are painted, in pink and blue, respectively, corresponding to the same color diagonal stripes and the three curved streaks. Colorful gestures are painted in correlation with digits existing within the infinite mathematical ratio (the "golden mean") in *Canone Aureo 948* (2011). Each mark's repetition is dictated by its partnered number, inexplicably providing geometric order to a natural phenomena.

ROSSO GIALLO VERDE BLU VIOLA (2008), a sprawling network of five vertical canvases from Griffa's *Alter Ego* series, pays homage to Brice Marden's mid-1960s monochrome paintings, long horizontal canvases, and joined diptychs or triptychs, painted in a range of grays shading into green and blue. Griffa dedicates each of his canvases to gestures of a single color, tapping into the residues of art history. Speaking to the memory of painting, Griffa captures the ground between his desire to participate alongside the intelligence of matter to record anonymous marks, and the belief that the artist is deeply attuned to the knowledge of one's temporal moment.

Gioiadolore (2021), translating to "Joy/Pain" is the latest painting included in the exhibition. It is part of Griffa's recent *Dilemma* series, which consists of works born from opposites, exploring the inherent conflict between yin and yang, left and right, presence and absence. Through color and form, Griffa probes the potential of a contradictory world, teetering between anonymous signs and known words, resolved to live side-by-side.

Giorgio Griffa lives and works in Turin, Italy. In March 2022, Giorgio Griffa will be the subject of a solo exhibition at the Centre Pompidou, Paris, France, curated by Christine Macel. The exhibition presents eighteen works spanning 1969 to 2021, and will include a work made especially for the Centre Pompidou, entitled *La Recherche* (*The Search*, 2021) as reference to Marcel Proust. A bilingual (French/English) catalogue will be published on occasion of the exhibition. Griffa's work is also currently on view in *Giorgio Griffa: Il tempo è memoria* at Musée des Beaux-arts de Chambéry, Chambéry, France until March 2022. Additional recent solo exhibitions include: Lille Métropole Musée d'art Moderne, Villeneuve-d'Ascq, France (2021) (solo); São Paulo Art Biennial, São Paulo, Brazil (2021); Palazzo Collicola, Spoleto, Italy (2021) (solo); Camden Arts Centre, London, UK (2020); Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Switzerland (2020); Tate Modern, London, UK (2019); Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nancy, Nancy, France (2019); Camden Arts Centre, London, UK (2018) (solo); Viva Arte Viva, 57th International Art Exhibition, Arsenale, Venice, Italy (2017); Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy (2017); Fundação de Serralves, Porto, Portugal (2016) (solo, traveling); Fondazione Giuliani, Rome, Italy (2016) (solo, traveling); Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen, Norway (2015) (solo, traveling); and Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Genève, Switzerland (2015) (solo, traveling); Fondazione Carrero, Milan, Italy (2015); Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri, Perugia, Italy (2015); a group show curated by Ugo Rondinone at Secession, Vienna, Austria (2015); Serralves Museum, Porto, Portugal (2014); Mies van der Rohe Haus, Berlin, Germany (2013) (solo); MACRO, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rome, Italy (2011) (solo); Museo d'arte contemporanea, Lissone, Italy (2010); and Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy (2009). Griffa's work can be found in permanent collections including Tate Modern, London, UK; Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art, Rivoli, Italy; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas, US; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, US; Frac des Pays De La Loire, Carquefou, France; Fundação de Serralves, Porto, Portugal; Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Rome, Italy; Galleria di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin, Italy; Grand Duke Jean Museum of Modern Art, Luxembourg; and Museo del Novecento, Milan, Italy.