

CHEIM & READ



Kimber Smith (1922 - 1981) *K's Mandolin*, 1970.
Acrylic on canvas. 104 x 65 in. / 264.2 x 165.1 cm.

Regarding Kimber

November 17, 2022 - January 7, 2023

Cheim & Read
547 West 25 Street
New York NY 10001

Cheim & Read is pleased to present *Regarding Kimber*, a group exhibition curated by Jay Gorney. The exhibition, which will include 14 works by eight artists, marks the centenary of the forward-looking abstract painter Kimber Smith (1922–1981) by exploring the impact of his practice on contemporary art. The show will open on November 17, 2022, at the gallery's Chelsea location, 547 West 25th Street, New York, and run through January 7, 2023.

Gorney notes that Smith's "loose and richly colored" paintings, with their "expanses of primed canvas and, occasionally, spray-painted passages," not only "stood in marked

contrast to the weightiness of Abstract Expressionism" but also "anticipated aspects of both Color Field painting and the 'provisional painting' of the early 2000s."

The qualities that characterize his work — intense colors and boldly articulated shapes coupled with ethereal textures and improvisational structures — are shared by the seven contemporary artists selected for the show: Marina Adams, Matt Connors, Joe Fyfe, Joanne Greenbaum, Eric N. Mack, Monique Mouton, and Peter Shear.

These artists continually push the limits of abstraction through materials, touch, formal invention, and informal facture. Set alongside brightly colored, loose-limbed compositions that Smith made during the last 15 years of his life, the contemporary works underscore the dynamic immediacy of an artist whose first show, a two-person exhibition with Joan Mitchell, was held at the New Gallery in New York City in 1951.

They also speak to the diversity of form and expression that can claim an affinity with Smith's work. The simple, fluid, nearly vertiginous shapes flowing across the surfaces of Marina Adams's paintings stand in contrast to the jagged, almost collage-like complexities of Matt Connors's latest works. Joanne Greenbaum engages undulating, calligraphic forms that hint at ecosystems and biomorphs, while Peter Shear's intimate abstractions create enigmatic statements on pigmented grounds through the sparsest of means.

Joe Fyfe, who has written about Smith's art and curated exhibitions of his work, makes a painterly use of collage that emphasizes the balance between openness and structure that became a hallmark of Smith's later work. Monique Mouton's irregular surfaces are graced with a translucency in which brushstroke, line, and shape fuse into an atmospheric whole, while Eric N. Mack uses the physical translucency of silk to create shaped fields of pattern and color.

When Kimber Smith was living in Paris (1954-1966), where he belonged to a community of expatriate painters that included Joan Mitchell, Shirley Jaffe, and Sam Francis, the poet John Ashbery, writing in the *International Herald Tribune*, called Smith and his fellow expat painter James Bishop the "most original of the Americans now in Paris." Smith's originality became only more apparent in the years that followed, and for the generations of artists who came of age after his untimely death, his clear-eyed, spontaneous, and uninhibited approach to painting has become a touchstone of integrity, exuberance, and freedom.