

REGEN PROJECTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



Image: Silke Otto-Knapp, *Untitled 16*, 2018. Watercolor on paper, 11 x 14 in (27.9 x 35.6 cm).

SILKE OTTO-KNAPP

JUNE 2 - AUGUST 12, 2023

Curated by Kitty Scott

PRESS PREVIEW WITH THE CURATOR: FRIDAY, JUNE 2, 11:00 AM

OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY, JUNE 2, 5:00 - 7:00 PM

GALLERY HOURS: TUESDAY - SATURDAY, 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Regen Projects is pleased to announce an exhibition of paintings and works on paper by **Silke Otto-Knapp** curated by Kitty Scott. This is the second solo presentation of the artist's work at the gallery, and the first in Los Angeles since her passing in October 2022.

This exhibition brings to the fore the broad reach and development of Otto-Knapp's late paintings. In them, her

depictions of dancers and landscapes all come to share the vocabulary of a black palette and an approach to staged pictorial space that hovers between limited depth and illusion. Otto-Knapp's studies or "watercolor drawings" were—together with photographs and digital images—the lifeblood of her preparatory approach to painting during this moment.

Otto-Knapp's *Clouds*, 2021, is—among many things—a direct response to Georgia O'Keeffe's wondrous and serene horizontal painting *Sky above Clouds IV*, 1965, dramatically installed in a stairwell at the Art Institute of Chicago. Otto-Knapp closely studied *Sky above Clouds IV* in 2016, when she was commissioned to make a work for a similar space in the Hammer Museum's lobby. She described O'Keeffe's monumental painting, which pictures clouds as seen from the window of an airplane, as possessing an "exuberant optimism that is infectious." While researching what would eventually become *Seascape (with moon)*, 2016, Otto-Knapp realized she could achieve a similarly large-scale horizontal work by using multiple panels. Composed of six panels, and some 33 feet long, *Seascape (with moon)* represents a massive shift in the size of her pictures; this also entailed a new way to paint within her unique watercolor technique. By adopting a simplified graphic method of using light and dark space to create images, she found a new, unsentimental painterly language—one that she would continue to use for the rest of her career. The foreboding sky of Otto-Knapp's *Clouds*, which signals a turbulent storm, could not be more different from O'Keeffe's. Whereas *Sky above Clouds* is buoyant, Otto-Knapp's *Clouds* powerfully expresses a darker and heavier, if equally compelling, atmosphere.

Small watercolor studies, photocopied images, and newspaper clippings connected to works in progress often adorned Otto-Knapp's studio walls. While making what is now considered one of her most ambitious works, *A series of images following one from the other. Eine aufeinander folgende Reihe von Bildern*, 2018, Otto-Knapp created a parallel, horizontally arranged archive of studies and associated imagery. We can see what she learned when making *Seascape (with moon)* and how she applied this new thinking to her figurative paintings. Yet where the multiple panels of *Clouds* and *Seascape (with moon)* share the same pictorial space, each section of *A series of images* represents a different space and introduces variation and rhythmic complexity to the overall work. The origins of these changes can be seen in the related studies presented here.

— Kitty Scott

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Silke Otto-Knapp (1970–2022) was born in Osnabrück, Germany, and lived in Los Angeles, where she served as professor of painting and drawing at the UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture. She earned an MA from Chelsea College of Art and Design, London, in 1996, and a Degree in Cultural Studies at the University of Hildesheim, Germany, in 1997.

Otto-Knapp has been the subject of solo exhibitions worldwide: *Silke Otto-Knapp*, Casa Mutina Milano, Italy (2022–2023); *Silke Otto-Knapp: In the waiting room*, The Renaissance Society, Chicago (2020); *Bühnenbilder*, Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis (2017–2018); *Land lies in water*, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (2015); *Monday or Tuesday*, Camden Arts Centre, London (2014); *Cold Climate*, Museo Marino Marini, Florence (2014); *Questions of Travel*, Kunsthalle Wien Karlsplatz, Vienna (2014), Fogo Island Arts, Canada (2014); *Geography and Plays*, Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen (2013); *A light in the moon / MATRIX 239*, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (2011–2012); *Many many women*, Kunstverein München (2010); *Present Time Exercise*, Modern Art Oxford (2009); and *50ft Queenie*, Tate Britain, London (2005–2006).

Her work has been included in recent group exhibitions such as *Joan Didion: What She Means*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2022–2023), Perez Art Museum, Miami (2023–2024); *Michael Clark: Cosmic Dancer*, Barbican Centre, London (2020–2021), V&A Dundee (2022); and *Though it's dark, still I sing*, the 34th Bienal de São Paulo (2021).

Otto-Knapp's work is held in the permanent collections of museums including the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; Art Institute of Chicago; Belvedere Museum, Vienna; Contemporary Art Museum of Luxembourg (Mudam); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Serralves Foundation, Porto; Tate Modern, London; and Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; among others.

Kitty Scott is a renowned curator in the field of contemporary art with decades of experience leading Canadian art institutions, including the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. She has organized numerous exhibitions including *Beautiful world, where are you?*, the 10th Liverpool Biennial (2018), and *A way out of the mirror*, Geoffrey Farmer's project at the Canada Pavilion for the 57th Venice Biennale (2017). She was an agent for dOCUMENTA (13) (2012) and has written extensively on contemporary art for journals, books, and catalogues.

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