

HEATHER DAY | LIMINAL SPACES

KÖNIG GALERIE | CHAPEL
9 MARCH – 13 APRIL 2024

KÖNIG GALERIE is pleased to present LIMINAL SPACES, a solo show by American artist, Heather Day, her first with the gallery. The exhibition is comprised of 7 paintings, all of which were made in 2024 and feature mixed media on canvas.

Since receiving her degree from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2012, Day, now based in the Mojave Desert in California, has developed a unique approach to painting that combines elements of collage and gestural brushwork. Day creates archives of painted works that she then cuts up, rearranges, and sews together to produce vibrant, color-rich tableaux. The end result is always abstract, and the components routinely eschew the strict orthogonal of the rectangular support, building subtle tension between the movement of Day's brush and the contours of her cutouts. In addition to the outward tension between the support and the content of these works, there is an internal tensity as well, between the visible strokes of paint and the self-contained fragments of the collaged elements. Each of the works on display in LIMINAL SPACES reflects Day's ability to balance her source material in a manner that achieves a harmonious balance between otherwise disparate parts.

Day manages to place her works within a genealogy of earlier painterly abstraction, from postwar artists like Helen Frankenthaler and Kenneth Noland to prewar pioneers Georgia O'Keeffe and Sophie Taeuber-Arp. Day's language is very much her own, though, and while it summons the inventions of her predecessors, the organicism of her paintings is equally at home in more contemporary, ecologically minded movements, especially given her embeddedness in the desert landscape. This fact is felt most poignantly in the quality of light that exudes from each of her works. In BLUE CHANNEL, for example, the white support of the canvas synergizes with the faded white of the cutout brushstrokes, creating an endless back-and-forth between the depicted and actual sources of the painting's luminescence.

While still managing to heave to the flatness of the canvas support, Day opens impossible spaces between layered elements to create dynamic compositions that follow certain patterns and contours. In the incredibly compact work, YELLOW EDGE, Day juxtaposes collaged and painted moments based on the repetition of a curved line whose horizontal drift contrasts with the vertical alignment of the support, building an internal rhythmic structure that seems self-generative, copying and re-presenting forms based on the shape of the cutout elements descending from the titular "yellow edge". Such compositional complexity is exemplary of all the works included in LIMINAL SPACES, which communicate internally as well as externally with one another, the paintings as a whole in a state of perpetual dialogue.

Day has brought the light of the Mojave Desert with her to the former Chapel at St. Agnes, along with a thoroughly contemporary take on earlier forms of modernist abstraction. Berlin is thus a fitting host for these tributaries and provides an opportunity to experience the continued relevance of the most concrete elements of painting – mark making, line, contour, and color.

KÖNIG GALERIE

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