

March Avery

Form Into Color

March 3 – April 25, 2026

Esther Schipper, Seoul

Esther Schipper Seoul is pleased to present **Form Into Color**, an exhibition by March Avery made possible in association with Waqas Wajahat, New York. This is Avery's first project with the gallery. The presentation offers a window into an ambitious body of work spanning four decades, marking the first comprehensive solo exhibition of Avery's oeuvre in Korea. The exhibition continues the gallery's dedication to present the work of internationally acclaimed female artists in Seoul.

Avery's paintings unfold like scenes from a diary, capturing quotidian scenes of family life, friendship, leisure, introspection, and quiet observation. From intimate domestic interiors to sunlit beaches and contemplative mountain ranges, her work draws directly from lived experience. Beginning with reality, Avery gradually shifts toward abstraction, transforming figures and settings into radiant blocks of saturated color and simplified form. As we let our eyes run over her canvases, however, each form turns into an inexhaustible intensity: scarlet red, immersive lilac, sage green, pale blue, mustard yellow, tender emerald, to name a few of the honeytrap shades which draw the eye closer. Each of these shades luminous while gentle, rubs against and compliments the others.

Bringing together portraits, still life and landscape paintings from the mid-1980s to today, the presentation offers an intimate window into the practice of a painter who, essentially, has not put the brush down since her upbringing in the 1930s and -40s New York City. In this vein, the exhibition proposes a quest into the world of a painter for whom art is at-once daily discipline and never-ending curiosity. Born in 1932 to the painters Sally Michel and Milton Avery, she was surrounded by artists and avant-gardists from an early age. Avery grew up during a period when artists, scholars, and leftists fled Europe to relocate to the United States. Not surprisingly, perhaps, she received her primary training from her parents and was heavily influenced by their studio practice. Rooted in a modernist lineage yet resolutely personal in vision, Avery described her lifelong fascination with color as follows: "I think I was painting in utero."

Based in Greenwich Village, the Avery family packed their easels over the summer months which they preferred spent in nature – from Vermont to Massachusetts, from Canada to Europe. While Avery is known to incorporate snapshots into the preliminary drawings from which she composes her paintings, **Terrace Umbrella** (1990) represents a timeless, inexhaustible moment hovering in-between serenity and recreation. The painting likely depicts the view from the terrace of the Avery family home in Bargeon, France. Executed in oil on canvas, the composition brings together soft rose, emerald, and vermilion shades with a near-black-purple and a crisp sky blue; it vividly testifies to the artist's sophisticated use of color in rendering terrestrial formations in an otherworldly light.

Avery enshrines moments of beauty within the everyday, conserving fleeting encounters in accentuated palettes and intuitive compositions. Her compositions reward both proximity and distance. Up close, delicate details emerge – the curve of a thigh in lipstick red (**Model and Louis**, 1997), the texture of fruit peel (**Pineapple Still Life**, 1983), subtle tonal shifts along promising coastlines (**Anatolian Coast**, 1981), or the atmosphere saturating the Hudson right before dusk (**Stroll Along the Hudson**, 2017). Stepping back, these particulars dissolve into expansive fields of color and balanced contours, where figure and ground begin to merge. The depicted bodies echo the lines of their surroundings, as the respective mis-en-scène falls into place.