

MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY

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SABINE MORITZ

23 June – 5 August 2022

Opening Reception: Thursday, 23 June 2022

Marian Goodman Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Sabine Moritz, which will feature a suite of new large-scale paintings and works on paper. The exhibition, the artist's first presentation in the New York gallery, follows three previous exhibitions held at Galerie Marian Goodman, Paris. The exhibition will be on view from Thursday, 23 June through Friday, 5 August 2022.

The presentation will be comprised of a new series of abstract paintings and new intimately scaled works on paper, all from 2021-2022. This vibrant, abstract terrain is presented in conjunction with four select representational works. This new body of work can be seen as the next chapter in Moritz's phenomenological practice — acts of deep looking that seek to understand the world. The exhibition is a continuation of Moritz's longstanding investigation into memory as a form of knowledge.

Sabine Moritz first came into prominence with paintings and drawings that recalled her childhood and youth in the German Democratic Republic. Often using personal remembrance and photographs as source material, these representational works drew on sites of daily life, such in the early important drawing series, *Lobeda*, but mostly did not involve human figures. By bringing together hallmarks of East and West Germany during the Cold War, the artist explored collective spaces and collective memory.

Over the past five years, Moritz has largely eschewed figuration in favor of dynamic, intensely wrought abstract works. Her recent paintings, densely composed and rich in color, are sensorial fields that necessitate and provoke a response in the viewer. In this way, the artist's turn to abstraction is a continuation of her inquiry of memory, moving to address the haptic, physiological ways in which we hold and transform history.

Moritz's abstract works draw on the current condition of the world, but are also, she states, "steeped in ambiguity." These works are rendered through a mix of observation and chance, and are often inspired by landscape and nature. As she has noted: "I am always thinking about time. In my studio, I try to suspend it. Different aspects of time are particularly important to my work, such as freezing, extending, disappearing..." The muted palette and meditative calm of *Toyoshima II* and *Toyoshima III*, two realist works which depict scenes of a seaside town, are counterbalanced by her distinct abstract series, *December I-IV*, 2021; *Underground I-III*, 2021-2022; *Lair I-IV*, 2022; *For the Lovers I-III*, 2022. These dynamic and highly chromatic works are both journeys of discovery and spaces of refuge for the artist. As the title *Lair* suggests, Moritz considers painting a space of shelter, a refuge to retire and reflect upon the world. But painting also conjures new ways of seeing, incorporating perception and outside references. The smaller-scale and intensely meditative *Under the Skin* works magnify the artist's abstract vocabulary within a condensed picture plane; while *Space I-II* and *Clouds III* introduce a pale blue palette, suggesting the natural world or the celestial.

Often citing the window on the world as inspiration, Moritz's abstract works are "mental landscapes" which continue to exist alongside and in parallel with her figurative works, to which she returns, on occasion, as a place of recovery. Her early painting, *Rest*, 2011, conflates refuge with the reality of war, in a continuation of a series of paintings about war and conflict that began in 2004.

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The exhibition features new charcoal, oil, and oil crayon works on paper titled *Shostakovich*, 2022, whose dense abstractions are sites of formal interrogation and experimentation. Through these evocative lyrical tableaux, largely made up of carmine and black strokes, Moritz explores the emotional register of color, the interplay of foreground and background, and the force of varied brushstrokes. These drawings, titled after the Russian composer, embody distinct emotional landscapes: some evoke turmoil, others a taut alertness. In several of these works, wiry, agile black lines are balanced by a pulsing red background. Moritz often treats line and color independently of each other, creating tension between the paper's surface and the work's atmospheric depth.

Interviewed by Jennifer Higgin in 2021, Moritz reflected on how memory has changed in her work, stating that “now it’s a more active process of being in the world and being in the present and protesting the present. Before I never had the feeling of “now.””

Sabine Moritz was born in 1969 in Quedlinburg, between Hannover and Leipzig in East Germany. As a child, she lived in Lobeda near Jena. Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, she immigrated with her family to West Germany. She first lived in Darmstadt, then Offenbach and Düsseldorf, where she studied at Hochschule für Gestaltung and at Kunstakademie, respectively. Today, Sabine Moritz lives and works in Cologne.

Moritz's work has been exhibited widely throughout Europe, including shows at Kunsthalle, Rostock, Germany (2019); Kunsthalle, Bremerhaven, Germany (2017); Serpentine Gallery, London (2015), Von der Heydt-Kunsthalle, Wuppertal-Barmen, Germany (2014); Art@GoldenSquare, London, and Foundation de 11 Lijnen, Oudenburg (both 2013). Her work has recently been shown in group exhibitions at the Imperial War Museum, London (2017); the Nassauischer Kunstverein, Wiesbaden (2013); Neues Museum – Staatl. Museum für Kunst und Design, Nuremberg (2012).

Please join us at our opening reception on Thursday, 23 June, from 6-8 pm. For further information, please visit our website mariangoodman.com or call the Gallery at: 212 977 7160.