

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Wall Street International
Marina Adams
26 May 2021



Marina Adams

4 Jun – 10 Jul 2021 at the Stephen Friedman Gallery in London, United Kingdom



Image: Marina Adams, '12x9_222', 2018. Gouache and Crayon on Arches Aquarelle Paper, 30.5 x 22.9cm (12 x 9in). Copyright Marina Adams. Courtesy the artist and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London.

American artist Marina Adams presents the first instalment of her twopart solo exhibition at Stephen Friedman Gallery in June 2021. Thirty paintings on paper, all measuring 12 x 9 inches, are exhibited together in the gallery's Viewing Room. Spanning over five years of her artistic practice from 2016 to 2021, these works reveal Adams' bold exploration of colour and form on a condensed scale. This is Adams' first solo exhibition at the gallery following the announcement of her representation in April 2020 and culminates with 'Wild Is Its Own Way', a presentation of large-scale paintings in September 2021.

Investigating the power of paint, line and colour, Adams sketches compositions in charcoal before allowing experimentation whilst working. Her paintings are a study in contrasts and unlikely pairings. Adams approaches her work with a startling minimal colour palette deployed with maximum energy. She brings into play meticulous organisation offset by improvisation. Adams observes and absorbs her environment to depict powerful abstract images with a subtle strength and passion.

'12x9' is a vibrant series of small-scale works where Adams articulates the relationship between colour, form and movement, skilfully blending a loose and repetitive structure with an energy that asserts the artist's poetic sense of narrative. She often explores diverse combinations of colour and tonality. In some of these paper works she paints with closely related hues or contrasts: '12x9285', from 2021 rendered in gouache and crayon on arches aquarelle paper, shows her fluid use of line and colour. Fluently propelling colour into form, Adams creates undulating and interlocking shapes. Other striking paintings such as 12x9277 and 12x9_273, both made in 2021 emphasise the powerful effect of the artist's exploration of colour in a vivid composition of rich, saturated shades and graphic shapes. Adams' constructs a distinctive voice that invites the viewer to reflect on layers of meaning and interpretation of form, an experience charged with rhythmic and mediative possibilities.

As the artist explains, "Meaning and intellect in abstract art can be difficult to locate, as there is no narrative to lead us into it. It is like the voice itself. I use pattern and colour to create the voice. And I use structure and form to channel it." In Artforum, Barry Schwabsky praises the delicate balance of dynamism and control that characterises Adams' work. "Everything seems animated, in movement," he writes. "The energy impelling this motion is never agitated or frantic but rather feels steady, relaxed, and spontaneously responsive.

Marina Adams (b. 1960, Orange, New Jersey) obtained a BFA from the Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia and an MFA from Columbia University, USA. Solo exhibitions of her work have been presented at Salon 94, New York; Galerie Gris, Hudson, New York; CUE Art Foundation, New York; and Magazzino d'Arte Moderna, Rome, Italy. Her work was also included in Making & Unmaking: An exhibition curated by Duro Olowu, Camden Arts Centre, London, UK. Adams received the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in 2016 and the Award of Merit Medal for Painting from the Academy of Arts and Letters in 2018. Adams lives and works in New York, USA and Parma, Italy.