

## **Flora Klein**

Nov 5–Dec 23, 2021

Opening Nov 4, 6–9 pm

Flora Klein's exhibition at Galerie Max Mayer presents new works in acrylic and oil on canvas alongside a series of graphite and colored pencil drawings. The drawings are pressed behind glass and hung densely, packed in a niche around the elevator shaft one passes on one's way to the paintings. The main elements of the drawings are long, mostly compressed snaking lines or spirals, which almost completely measure out the surface of the paper and are at times even cut off at the edge. The variation of the line's width and its rhythmic interruptions, as well as tricks such as the simultaneous use of two pencils, track the movement of the hand even where it briefly loses contact with the paper before touching down again. The lines don't mark gesture and speed as much as they do the divergence between gesture and trace.

Klein's paintings are structured by horizontal and vertical bands of color. Like a grid of twisting pipes or cables, stripes of varying widths overlap, occasionally laid out directly upon the blank white of the primed canvas. Where a strip turns, the corners are softly rounded. In bold orange and reddish-brown against a white background, these corners evoke 1960s design or its echo in Apple products, although neither allusion is particularly prominent. In *Additive* (2021) the more accentuated staggering of the stripes and the greater variation in their width reinforces an optical effect of spatial depth. This, nevertheless, repeatedly collides with the surface of the support, for example where many stripes, shortened to wide rectangles, are closely stacked to form a heavy block. Some of the smaller canvases, such as *Untitled* and *M29* (both 2020), are more intricate, with areas of paint applied in washes. In some instances, the color of a single stripe alternates along its length, from a bold blue to a dull metallic green or from a thinning black to a shit-brown coming from the other direction. The paintings skillfully avoid any impression of elegance or lightness of brushwork. Rather than a composition, the works display a sequence of marks distributed over the surface. Each fixed in overlapping, quickly drying layers of paint, these articulations cannot be revised—they become the starting point for new articulations. Those who wish to can reconstruct the process through which, in the feedback between material and artist, the painting's form has emerged.

Jakob Schillinger

