

Ulrike Müller was born in Austria and lives in New York.

In her **enamel works** she explores the relationships between abstraction and body. Ulrike Müller applies a production technique that has historically been used across cultures as decorative art, but also by industry to produce signs and everyday objects. Müller applies this firing technique to produce paintings that reuse a range of modernist vocabularies. The individual works are of intimate scale, but their forms radiate outwards and decompress contents embedded in and under the hard finish of their reflective surfaces. Often the image is determined by a vertical bisection of the space. While the eye is drawn up and down, the vertical bipartition also allows transposing shapes in any direction, in order to work out a logic of representation.

The geometries of figure and colour in her compositions, however, are never "purely" abstract. They carry erotic associations. Two parts seem to tease, touch and penetrate each other without falling into binary logics. Müller uses abstraction as an idiom that can be pictorially appropriated, emotionally charged, and can be politically connoted. Depending on the context and the viewer, her works are closely related to current questions of body and identity politics.

In a similar way to the enamel paintings with their seductive palette and glossy surface the **woven rugs**, hand-woven from local natural fibers by Zapotec weavers in Mexico, twist the classic paradigms of modernist abstraction with handcrafted sensuality. For example, a field of abstract forms frames the image of a cat and triggers the cliché of stereotypical feminine sentiment that accompanies pets and weaving.

In addition, Müller transfers some of her compositional strategies into the exhibition space. By painting the walls, the architecture is transformed into a three-dimensional pictorial space that one enters.

The individual pictorial elements repeat themselves selectively from one group of works to the next and appear alternately in the enamel paintings, carpets and **collages**.

The connection of collage and monotype by the printing technique links painting and drawing, interweaving Müller's main approaches by adding transparent, overlapping areas of colour to enliven the images, creating a decentred, polymorphous field of tension without clear boundaries.