

Gerhardsen Gerner is very pleased to announce the opening of the fall season with its first solo exhibition by American artist David Korty.

David Korty's paintings emanate introverted ease and calm. The Los Angeles-based painter creates images of modern urban life and shows us cityscapes, people in museums looking at works of art, libraries, airports, cars, and houses.

Korty's interplay of lines and color provides a stylistic unity of the depicted persons and their environment. Photographs compose the source material for Korty's paintings, which he takes in his hometown of Los Angeles or while traveling to other metropolises. The painterly renegotiation of the original filters what is photographically documented and allows it to become geometrically composed fields of line and color. Details disappear or become highlighted elsewhere, while faces, bodies, and perspective become smoothed over. Playing with graphite lines, brushstrokes and color fields, the artist distills the spatial world of experience, setting free its underlying linear patterns and structures for our view.

Korty's handling of the material functions similarly: the layers of paint are not opaque, but show in some places the grain of the canvas, the outlines in graphite pencil and wax crayon strokes. In some places, the color pigments are applied with a fine palette knife instead of a brush. In his first solo exhibition in Germany with Gerhardsen Gerner, the artist focuses on portraits and detailed views of everyday things.

Four images of women in profile are presented in a geometric mesh of quadrangle forms. With its flatness, the series seems to work as an experiment to reduce the human profile to lines and shapes of color. Spatial depth is indicated only through the overlapping of different elements.

When comparing these works to the picture of a small pile of correspondence on black backdrop or the Dadaesque collage of reminiscent notes and newspaper clippings on blue backdrop, one notices that the pictures of women's profiles are close-ups based on photographs shot amongst these collections of paper.

The only exception is the shoulder-length portrait of a young woman with tied up red hair. The human figure is no longer a picture within a picture, but is represented directly. However, Korty also continues the theme here: against the black background fine, overlapping white lines in the form of paper sheets are repeated.

Another series creates a second focus, with a recurring motif in Korty's visual language: in a body of three further paintings, the artist presents variations on a portrait of a woman with a cat mask. A fourth image shows a double view of the portrait with the cat mask along with a young woman with glasses, raising questions about the identity of the woman wearing the mask. Just as in the profile studies, the aspect of the picture within the picture is taken up again.

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