

SPENCER BROWNSTONE GALLERY

Jule Korneffel

In Search of Lost Light

March 18 - May 2, 2026

Opening Wednesday, March 18, 6-8pm

Spencer Brownstone Gallery is pleased to present Jule Korneffel's *In Search of Lost Light*. The artist's third solo exhibition with the gallery features a new body of paintings that continues her investigation into distinct qualities of light through considered layering of color and medium. While her previous work focused on the chromatic phenomenon of dusk and twilight, this one looks at the slow emergence of light during the time before dawn, the brief moment a color holds its breath before breaking into day.

At the heart of the series is the ongoing fascination with liminal light, what Korneffel describes as its "in-between frequency," and the way certain optical conditions like morning fog or the pale hues in the sky suggestion of dawn, seem to compress time or trigger involuntary recall. The works engage Proustian ideas of memory and duration, not as narrative, but as atmosphere; the gaps in knowing that invite imagination to complete the picture.

The largest work and conceptual center of the series, *In Search of Lost Light* (echoing Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*) names a precise perceptual pursuit: the recovery of a fleeting light. Although the possibility of its reclamation remains uncertain, Korneffel expresses an undying hope in its endeavor and a reflection of the present moment.

Aurora and Her Siblings (Morgenröte) distills the series to its most elemental form — two circular marks on an auroral red ground, readable as sun and moon brought into unity on a single painted field. *Monet's Morning (in a Nutshell)* approaches the same threshold from within. The painting's dominant tone is mauve, the grayish purple-pink of morning dew and fog, a light that glows neither inward nor outward but holds itself in suspension.

Withered Summer (with Proust) / Giotto's San Francis Before Restoration meditates on faded color. Pigments that have withdrawn from their original saturation can paradoxically seem to contain more space and time. The title invokes both Proust's attention to elapsed seasons and the subdued palette of pre-restoration fresco by Florentine painter Giotto di Bondone, where centuries of accumulation have produced a tonal world richer in its impoverishment.

The oldest and darkest work in the cycle, *Florentine Night (Clair de Lune)* captures not night itself but its final passage, the first tremor of dawn. A blue surface tone is activated from beneath by the warm presence of burnt Sienna (evoking the *Morgenröte* or Morning Red) that suffuses the sky as the sun draws near. Its title emerged from Korneffel's memory of crossing a bridge over the Arno in Florence at such an hour, and the sudden recognition of sharing a sky with the painters of the Renaissance.

Drawing on the Old Masters' technique of layering tones within the natural color spectrum, Korneffel employs an abstract pictorial language to render internal states made visible through paint: memory surfacing, time suspended, consciousness at its most permeable edge.

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Jule Korneffel was born in Germany and graduated from Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in 2008 as Meisterschüler under Tal R. Since 2015 Korneffel has been based in New York City where she received an M.F.A. from Hunter College in 2018. She quickly gained attention for her colorful, yet reductive paintings imbued with emotion and has been exhibiting her paintings continuously since the start of her career. Recent exhibitions include “In Search of Lost Light” at Spencer Brownstone Gallery, NYC, US (2026); “Here comes the night” at Spencer Brownstone Gallery (2022); and “Here comes trouble” at Spencer Brownstone Gallery (2019); “Breath,” curated by John Yau, M. David Gallery & Artcake, Brooklyn, NY, US (2025); “Close as Bone,” curated by Scott M. Shepard, Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin, DE (2024); “Mini Me Mary” in dialogue with Mary Heilmann at Albada Jelgersma Gallery in Amsterdam, NL (2019); “All that kale” at Claas Reiss Gallery in London, UK (2020); and “Phase Patterns” at Ild Los Angeles, LA, US (2019); In October 2021 her work was featured in two solo shows “Snippets from the Met” with Albada Jelgersma Gallery. Her work was featured on Platform Art (backed by David Zwirner) in 2021 and again in 2022 as part of their Anniversary Capsule and featured in their Spotlight section. Some recent press and writings include a feature on the “I Like Your Work” podcast with Erika B. Hess (2026), John Yau’s review “Color Is the Carrier of Emotion” in Hyperallergic (2019), followed by his review “The Pleasure of Slow Looking” in Hyperallergic (2022); “The Ongoing Present Moment of Making: Jule Korneffel” Interviewed by Hannah Bruckmüller in BOMB Magazine (2021); Terry R. Myers’ essay on occasion of her show at Claas Reiss (2020/2021); “Jule Korneffel: Here comes the night” by Andrew L. Shea as Artseen in the Brooklyn Rail (2022); Platform Art Spotlight: “In the Studio: Jule Korneffel. The artist on the alchemy of color and calling two places home” (2022.)