

Mitchell-Innes & Nash is pleased to present its inaugural exhibition of works by artist Kiki Kogelnik (1935–1997). This exhibition will take place in the gallery’s Chelsea location and will feature paintings, sculptures and works on paper spanning two decades from the early sixties to the late eighties. *Kiki Kogelnik* will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, with an essay by Dana Miller.

In a life and career that encompassed multiple continents, disciplines and movements (both political and aesthetic), there was one constant in the work of Kiki Kogelnik: the body. Through her tracings, cutouts and paintings of the human figure, Kogelnik captured the silhouette of contemporary society and its ever shifting ambitions and concerns. At once buoyantly glamorous and deeply sincere, Kogelnik’s practice reflected the discordant aura of the decades that followed the Second World War—a period marked by both achievement and upheaval, trauma and rebirth. Indeed, Kogelnik, born in Austria but living and working in New York for most of her life, was moved by both humanity’s ability to send a man to the moon as well as its capacity for nuclear annihilation.

Some of the earliest works in the exhibition highlight Kogelnik’s fascination with the technological advances made in computing. Created with body tracings and anatomical stamps, these works dating from the mid- to late-1960s show android-like figures intermingled with circuit boards, wires and pieces of machinery. Not only do these works reflect the innovations (and imaginations) spurred on by the digital revolution of the 1950s and 1960s, but they also emphasize Kogelnik’s interest in fields where women were largely excluded or marginalized.

In the 1970s, Kogelnik began making a series of paintings using imagery appropriated from fashion advertisements, thereby issuing a critique of the representation of femininity by mimicking its very archetype in the mass media: stylish consumers of fashion who, in their statuesque poses, become themselves objects for consumption. In its figurative detail and adoption of appropriation strategies, works like *Dynamite Darling* represent a distinct departure from the body tracings of the previous decade, where only the silhouette of the human form is given.

The latest piece in the exhibition is a 1986 sculptural installation from her *Hangings* series titled *Divided Souls*. Here, Kogelnik gives three-dimensional form to her tracings, using them as templates for vinyl cutouts suspended from a steel garment rack. Inspired by the racks of clothing being pushed on the streets in front of her Garment District studio, the sculpture is a tongue-in-cheek interpretation of the “hanging of art” while also making a comment on the marketplace of culture and its parallels to the fashion industry. Like most of her work, the polished simplicity of the *Hangings* belie the messy and complex realities they represent, touching upon issues of race,

gender, war and violence. Indeed, at a time when the lofty and self-referential practices of Conceptual art were in vogue, Kogelnik's practice sought to reaffirm art's ability to reflect and affect reality.

*(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)*