

Dryer, Davie, Diamond

Moira Dryer, Karin Davie, Martha Diamond

July 2–August 14, 2026

Level One

Magenta Plains is pleased to present *Dryer, Davie, Diamond*, an exhibition of paintings by three female abstract painters representing distinct generations of New York's downtown art scene. The works are united by their use of fluid line, undulating stripes, and the immediacy of wet-on-wet paint application. Emphasizing both the performative act of painting and the canvas as a dynamic field of movement, the exhibition takes shape through a conceptual connection between Moira Dryer and her aunt, the renowned mathematician Cathleen Synge Morawetz, whose pioneering wave theories helped solve complex engineering problems in the aerospace industry.

Wave-like forms reverberate throughout the exhibition, from Dryer's references to fingerprints and medical diagnostics such as EKG tracings to Karin Davie's sweeping, continuous brushstrokes. Though less explicit in Martha Diamond's work, her distinctive compositional structures and exploration of the material and immaterial properties of light establish a productive dialogue with Dryer and Davie. Together, the three artists use abstraction as a means to investigate movement, perception, color, and the fluid nature of paint itself.

Moira Dryer (Toronto, CA, 1957–1992) was an experimental abstract painter who bridged the gap between Conceptualism and contemporary painting. She approached the wave form not simply as formal phenomena but as a way to understand perception and space itself. The paintings included in this exhibition date from the late 1980s and feature Dryer's characteristic casein on wood: a fast-drying, water-soluble medium that Dryer negotiated both compositionally and alchemically. Rejecting fixed compositions, Dryer's works become relational structures: systems shaped by interference and resonance.

Karin Davie (Toronto, CA, b. 1965) is a contemporary abstract painter who spent thirty formative years living and working in New York, well aware of the influence of painters such as Dryer and Diamond. Her works utilize potent gestural brushstrokes largely defined by a shift in values from light to dark, producing glowing fields of paint. For Davie, the wave motif functions as a metaphor for emotional states, rendered in a luminous, tightly executed fashion to create dynamic tension. Where Dryer's paintings seem to evoke motion despite being static, Davie's evoke the experience of seeing wavelengths, energies, and emotions moving through and between things.

Martha Diamond (New York, NY, 1944–2023) produced lush and loose abstract cityscapes inspired by a lifetime of living on the Bowery. Her bravura compositions captured the emotional character of built space, combining spirited experimentation with perceptive observation. She wrote in 1989, "I know the city has straight lines or edges, but as I walk around, the ending or beginning of substance becomes less absolute." Diamond's slashes of color create the sensation of visual turbulence that sets the stage for the pulsing panels of Dryer and Davie.

Moira Dryer's work has been exhibited posthumously in solo exhibitions such as *Moira Dryer: Back in Business*, The Phillips Collection, Washington D.C (2020); a traveling exhibition titled *Moira Dryer*, curated by Gregory Salzman, Art Gallery of York University, Toronto, ON, Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA, The Contemporary Museum, Baltimore, MD (2001).

Her work is held in numerous public collections such as the Buffalo AKG, NY; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, ON; Birmingham Museum of Art, AL; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Newark Museum, NJ; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

Martha Diamond was the subject of the major survey exhibition *Deep Time*, co-organized by the Colby College Museum of Art in Waterville, ME (2024) and The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, CT (2025). Other solo exhibitions of her work have been held at the New York Studio School, NY (2004); Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, ME (1988); and Portland Museum of Art, ME (1988), among others. Her work is in the permanent collections of institutions including the Art Institute of Chicago, IL; Brooklyn Museum, NY; Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, ME; Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA; Minneapolis Institute of Art, MN; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

Karin Davie's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT; The Buffalo AKG Art Museum, Buffalo, NY; CHART, New York, NY; Diaz Contemporary, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Inman Gallery, Houston, TX; Mary Boone Gallery, New York, NY; SITE, Santa Fe, NM; Wetterling Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden; White Cube, London, United Kingdom; and Van Doren Waxter, New York, NY, among others.

Her work may be found in the collections of the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; The Buffalo AKG Art Museum, Buffalo, NY; The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum & Art Gallery, Saratoga Springs, NY; Kunstverein in Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany; Nerman Museum Of Contemporary Art, Overland Park, KS; The Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, FL; Orlando Museum of Art, Orlando, FL; Palm Springs Art Museum, Palm Springs, CA; Rubell Museum, Miami, FL; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA; and elsewhere. Davie lives and works in Seattle, WA.

Magenta Plains is grateful to Miles McEnery Gallery for helping make this exhibition possible.