PETRA CORTRIGHT

October 12 – November 16

Petra Cortright is an interdisciplinary artist known both for her role in the “Net-Art” movement – a movement that uses the Internet as its primary source - and as a “post-Internet artist” which is to say of the generation after the progenitors of Net-Art.

For her first show at Danziger Gallery, Cortright has produced a suite of new works that she describes as “domestic landscapes”. Subtly or subconsciously referencing two iconic women artists - Agnes Martin for the grids that form the foundation upon which Cortright’s layers intertwine, and Joan Mitchell for the vibrant and assertive brushstrokes that are the core elements of each work.

As she has done for over a decade Cortright’s works engage the digital world we live in in fresh and original ways. She creates each unique piece by harvesting images from the internet, loading them into Photoshop, and then manipulating, stretching, and carving them up. She invents her own icons and marks using digital paintbrushes to make her brushstrokes, combining these with the manipulated and appropriated images.
Cortright then modifies her files endlessly, adding and subtracting colors, layers, and shapes until they reach her (or their) own decisive moment. The works in this show are among Cortright’s first to engage with the grid - a visual structure that lies at the heart of much contemporary art as well as being an organizing principle for the web. In Cortright’s pieces, the shapes and brushstrokes move in front of and behind the set grid following and disrupting its order.

A celebration of the continuing evolution of Cortright’s painting practice, while at first glance these works may seem complex, they aim for simplicity and harmony, revealing themselves over time, and in Cortright’s words being “a defense of beauty”. Printed on a metal base with 6 or more passes through the printer, the various parts merge into a unique amalgam of painting, photograph, and appropriation - the flatness of each work echoing the flatness of the screen on which they are created.

As Cortright points out things move so fast that internet and digital sources are changed generationally if not sooner. Engaging with the past, present, and future these new works inspire meditations on color, form, and the act of art-making itself.

Petra Cortright was born in Santa Barbara in 1986 and currently lives and works in Los Angeles. She studied Fine Arts at the Parsons School of Design, and the California College of the Arts in San Francisco. Her pieces have been shown in museums and galleries around the world.


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