

Madeleine Keesing: Marking Time

On View at Goya Contemporary December 6, 2023 – January 16, 2024

Reception: December 16, 2023, from 3:00 to 5:00pm

Curator: Amy Eva Raehse

For Immediate Release: Goya Contemporary Gallery is pleased to announce the exhibition *Madeleine Keesing: Marking Time* on view from December 6, 2023, through January 16, 2024, with a reception held on December 16 from 3-5pm.

Celebrated for her monumental, layered, system-based chromatic abstractions, the recently accomplished paintings in Madeleine Keesing's forthcoming exhibition are distinguished by their rhythmic, formal play whereby patterns are meticulously layered in intervals that reinforce the artist's meditative, intentional, and thoughtful focus on the duration of mark marking.

Educated in the Formalist-Modernist tradition, Madeleine Keesing began her practice in the late 1960's- early 1970's and was clearly aware of the Feminist, Color Field, and Pattern & Design movements. In the succeeding years her style evolved to include a method of laborious material application whereby she carefully positioned small droplets of paint in repetitive rows. By way of their concern with color -monochromatic, and later, variegated- Keesing's practice has often been compared with post-minimalist vernacular, yet for many years has nodded to the dialect of Fiber Arts as well as Aboriginal painting. Thickly layering two, three or more striations of variously colored paint, the earlier works created a vibrant sensory experience where process and effect comingle. The later works sometimes explore the flatness of that former way of working, thinning down the accumulation of paint surface, but amplifying the meticulous markings though illusionistic space. Regardless, Keesing's temporal works surpass purely formalist qualities of hue, texture, and line, and give way to richer, more complex, and transcendent engagements that make the paintings seem alive.

Thomas Krens, former Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim in New York, and later the Guggenheim's Senior Advisor for International Affairs, includes Keesing's work in his private collection and described the intricacy of her painting technique by saying "... [they have a] three-dimensional quality, not unlike a delicate tapestry. Each [paint] droplet could be compared to the perfect knot of an ancient rug. Ms. Keesing applies her paint with the dedication and care of both a medieval weaver and a manuscript illuminator."

Though her process is highly controlled, Keesing says the repetition allows the paintings to take on "a life of their own," depending on the viewer's frame of reference. The artist's works reflect her boundless world travels to Turkey, Japan, Beijing, France, India, Africa, and the most wonderous natural settings within the United States. Viewing Tibetan textiles, *chinoiserie* toiles, or Aboriginal artifacts for example, had a profound and stimulating effect on her work, as did the intensity of the blue skies and waters of Vieques, Puerto Rico, where the artist occasionally lives. Not so much a collective conscious, Keesing's practice echoes a collective awareness and acceptance of the world though all aspects and transformations of time: past, present, and future. Her works feel at once *microscopic* and *macroscopic*; they live by companionship in their scale because the artist deliberately causes the observer to sink inside the works, creating an intimate, human, visceral and on occasion, mystifying experience.

"I remember the day I decided to be an artist" said Keesing. "I was eight years old, and until then I had wanted to be a scientist studying butterfly transformations. I opened a dresser drawer and discovered a pile of painting reproductions. There was a particular one I found completely entrancing. It's not a painting I am drawn to today; it was a robust painting of an exultant woman, laughing, and I wished I had made it. So, that was the moment I decided to be a painter, and I jumped around the room screaming "I will be a painter, I will be a painter" ...And I have been a painter, since." Born in Woodbury, NJ (1941), Keesing attended the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn from 1959 to 1963 and later graduated with a BFA from the California College of Arts and Crafts. She obtained her MFA from the University of North Carolina in Greensboro in 1974. Her work is included in museum collections, including the Guggenheim, and has been the subject of exhibitions across the country. Images: © Madeleine Keesing, Photos Joe Hyde

Goya Contemporary is free and open to the public. Hours of operation: Tue – Fri, 10am – 6pm | Sat., 12-4pm by appointment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy Eva Raehse, Executive Director & Partner at Goya Contemporary Gallery

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About Goya Contemporary Goya Contemporary Gallery promotes the art and culture of our time, presenting ideas through exhibitions, curatorial practice, catalogues, print publishing, artist representation, and cultivation of collecting. The gallery builds private & public collections, assist in acquisitions, and facilitates auction activity. Goya Contemporary has earned international acclaim for its thought-provoking exhibitions, innovative programming, and unique collaborations with artists. Known as one of the most ethical, prestigious, and long running galleries in the mid-Atlantic, Goya is dedicated to scholarly programming, and promoting the work of mid-career artists globally and locally. #####