

Jennifer Guidi

More Life

September 9 – October 21, 2017

Opening reception: Saturday, September 9, 2017, 6:00-8:00pm



Seen In Stillness (Universe Mandala SF #5G, Rose, Black Sand), 2017,
sand, acrylic and oil on linen, 116 x 98 x 2 inches (294.6 x 248.9 x 5.1 cm)

David Kordansky Gallery is pleased to announce More Life, an exhibition of new paintings by Jennifer Guidi. The artist's first show with the gallery, it will open on September 9 and remain on view through October 21, 2017. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, September 9 from 6:00pm until 8:00pm. Guidi's characteristic use of sand as a medium will be on display in this group of works, including her largest paintings to date, whose mandala-like patterning and intensity of color make them immersive, full-body experiences. Extending into one of the gallery's viewing rooms, the show will also feature a group of horizontal works in which the connection between landscape and abstraction is made directly tangible.

Jennifer Guidi has emerged in recent years as a crucial voice in Los Angeles painting. Her work draws from several lineages, including the visionary Modernism of the American Southwest, process-oriented minimalism, Light and Space, and lyrical West Coast abstraction, as well as textile construction and the many strains of art throughout the globe in which intense optical patterning is a driving force. It is also inspired by, and in turn generates, personal, meditative states of looking in which boundaries between the outside world and internally visualized spaces break down. In so doing, Guidi makes images of what it means and feels like to see, whether this is understood to be a physical or metaphysical phenomenon. She addresses these concerns not by relying on the eye alone, but by producing tactile surfaces in which sand, acrylic and oil mediums, and pigment are combined. The particulate nature of this mixture is reflected in her serial imagery, which is comprised of seemingly boundless arrays of small marks arranged in radiating systems.

More Life will introduce several new variations on these themes. In one series of large-scale paintings, she begins by inscribing a linear drawing on a ground that has been prepared with sand; this image is then covered, and in some cases entirely obscured, by a vast oil paint mandala composition. The underlying networks of lines are drawn from a variety of sources like maps (including one of her own neighborhood in Los Angeles), astronomical constellations, and extant esoteric diagrams, but some are freely imagined. Independent of their visibility in the finished work or their reference to specific kinds of information, they provide an organizing visual structure that drifts in and out of the viewer's perceptual field, and within and beyond the mind's grasp.

Two similarly sized monochromatic green paintings also feature immense mandala compositions but incorporate different approaches to both texture and color. Rather than use the sand/medium mixture as a ground alone, in these works Guidi builds up a thicker, undulating, more overtly sculptural surface. And rather than applying marks with paint and a brush, she employs specially designed wood tools to press small divots into this surface, creating increased depth of relief. The marks and the grains of sand into which they are pressed thereby come to represent two versions of apparent limitlessness. Standing close to the painting and focusing on any one mark reveals a compressed space filled with innumerable physical particles. Standing further back, meanwhile, the field of marks that make up the mandala seem to extend beyond the limits of one's peripheral vision, an effect enhanced by the vivid, enveloping saturation of the artist's colors.

In another series of paintings featuring sculptural mark-making, Guidi has for the first time opted for an extreme horizontal format. She

takes on the traditions of the landscape genre by dividing the canvases into upper and lower portions so that they clearly read as views of mountains and sky. Sand, spray paint, and washes of pigment are laid down first, lending the paintings a soft luminosity that supports the harder-edged, optically active patterning created by the individual marks subsequently pressed into their surfaces. A final layer of paint is then carefully applied to the interior of the impressions, so that while these marks give the illusion of floating in the foreground, the color that radiates from within them is in fact slightly further away from the viewer's eye.

Each element of Guidi's pictorial vocabulary--foreground, background, representation, and abstraction--is completely porous to the others, just as the external world one sees is inseparable from the internal structures of the eye that translate light to the brain, or a "purely" non-objective painting is fused to the cultural narratives by which it gains meaning. Guidi allows such layers of signification to come in and out of focus, prompting the viewer to revel in the pure sensory experience of color and form while simultaneously analyzing the organic precision with which the paintings are constructed. She engenders an altogether contemporary version of the sublime, one in which the tiniest details are of no less consequence than the overarching totality of the big picture.

Jennifer Guidi (b. 1972, Redondo Beach, California) is currently the subject of a solo exhibition at Museo Villa Croce, Genoa, Italy through September 24, 2017. She has also been the subject of solo exhibitions at Almine Rech Gallery, New York (2017); Massimo De Carlo, London (2016); Harper's Apartment, New York (2016); and LAXART, Los Angeles (2015). Recent group exhibitions include Unpacking: The Marciano Collection, Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles (2017); No Man's Land: Women Artists from the Rubell Family Collection, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C. (2016) and Rubell Family Collection, Miami (2015); and The Afghan Carpet Project, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2015). Guidi lives and works in Los Angeles.