

CASEY KAPLAN

121 WEST 27TH STREET
NEW YORK NY 10001
TEL +1 212 645 7335
WWW.CASEYKAPLANGALLERY.COM
INFO@CASEYKAPLANGALLERY.COM

Giorgio Griffa: *OCÉANIE*
September 7 – October 28, 2023

I gave this series the title OCÉANIE because it was born from a reflection on the work of Matisse – Océanie, La Mer (1946-47), and Océanie, Le Ciel (1946).

Once Newton's perfect mechanical universe has fallen apart, Matisse represents space by occupying it rhythmically, a sign after another, like walking, one step after another.

In our quantum universe, life is everywhere. Everything is born and everything dies.

From the infinite smallness of particles (one billionth of a millimeter) to the infinite largeness of the universe (billions of light years), the indeterminate energy builds identities, worlds, flowers, people, trees, stones, water, air, fire, stars, and galaxies.

Every identity lives and dies, and when it dies it returns to the primary energy, immense and unknown.

Each sign of the brush is a new identity on its own, there is no need for it to represent anything other than itself. It is both reality and representation of reality.

Material reality are the marks left directly by the brush. Immaterial reality, such as thought, are the marks that emerge from the painting outside of them.

Giorgio Griffa, 2023

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OCÉANIE consists of a series of nineteen paintings created between the fall of 2022 and the spring of 2023, marking the most significant shift in Giorgio Griffa's practice in over a decade. This is the artist's sixth solo presentation at the gallery.

Since 1968, Griffa has developed a painting practice that records "the memory of material," allowing brush, paint, and canvas to dictate the outcome of his work. By eliminating perspective and narrative, Griffa's "fragments of space" simply record the repetitive and spontaneous sequences of marks and gestures. Beginning with unprimed, unstretched raw canvas laid out like sheets on the floor, Griffa works slowly across them, crouching and kneeling on the material in a way that aligns him with his tools: water-based acrylic paints, mixed thinly, that seep and bleed upon application. The rawness of the resulting color fields, along with the large areas of unpainted canvas, gives Griffa's paintings a provisional feel, emphasizing his convictions about the independent life of the materials. The paintings are exhibited unframed, pinned directly to the wall with small nails along their top edge, and when not displayed, are folded into sections and stacked, creating an embossed underlying grid for his compositions. In conjunction with the opening of *OCÉANIE*, MASSIMODECARLO London will be hosting a solo presentation featuring Giorgio Griffa's 1990s cycle entitled *Tre Linee e un Arabesco*, running from September 7 - October 7.

Giorgio Griffa (b. 1936, Turin) lives and works in Turin, Italy. Recent exhibitions include Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2022) (solo); Musée des Beaux-arts de Chambéry, Chambéry, France (2022) (solo); Lille Métropole Musée d'art Moderne, Villeneuve-d'Ascq, France (2021) (solo); São Paulo Art Biennial, São Paulo, Brazil (2021); Palazzo Collicola, Spoleto, Italy (2021) (solo); Camden Arts Centre, London, UK (2020); Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Switzerland (2020); Tate Modern, London, UK (2019); Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nancy, Nancy, France (2019); Camden Arts Centre, London, UK (2018) (solo); Viva Arte Viva, 57th International Art Exhibition, Arsenale, Venice, Italy (2017); Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy (2017); Fundação de Serralves, Porto, Portugal (2016) (solo, traveling); Fondazione Giuliani, Rome, Italy (2016) (solo, traveling); Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen, Norway (2015) (solo, traveling); and Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Genève, Switzerland (2015) (solo, traveling); Fondazione Carriero, Milan, Italy (2015); Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri, Perugia, Italy (2015); a group show curated by Ugo Rondinone at Secession, Vienna, Austria (2015); Serralves Museum, Porto, Portugal (2014); Mies van der Rohe Haus, Berlin, Germany (2013) (solo); MACRO, Museu d'Arte Contemporanea, Rome, Italy (2011) (solo); Museo d'arte contemporanea, Lissone, Italy (2010); and Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy (2009). Griffa's work can be found in permanent collections including Tate Modern, London, UK; Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art, Rivoli, Italy; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas, US; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, US; Frac des Pays De La Loire, Carquefou, France; Fundação de Serralves, Porto, Portugal; Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Rome, Italy; Galleria di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin, Italy; Grand Duke Jean Museum of Modern Art, Luxembourg; and Museo del Novecento, Milan, Italy.