

MITCHELL-INNES & NASH

KIKI KOGELNIK

534 West 26th Street, New York, NY

May 23 – June 29, 2019

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 23 from 6 to 8 PM



NEW YORK, April 17, 2019 – Mitchell-Innes & Nash is pleased to present its inaugural exhibition of works by artist **Kiki Kogelnik** (1935–1997). This exhibition will take place in the gallery’s Chelsea location and will feature paintings, sculptures and works on paper spanning two decades from the early sixties to the late eighties. *Kiki Kogelnik* will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, with an essay by Dana Miller.

In a life and career that encompassed multiple continents, disciplines and movements (both political and aesthetic), there was one constant in the work of Kiki Kogelnik: the body. Through her tracings, cutouts and paintings of the human figure, Kogelnik captured the silhouette of contemporary society and its ever shifting ambitions and concerns. At once buoyantly glamorous and deeply sincere, Kogelnik’s practice reflected the discordant aura of the decades that followed the Second World War—a period marked by both achievement and upheaval, trauma and rebirth. Indeed, Kogelnik, born in

Austria but living and working in New York for most of her life, was moved by both humanity’s ability to send a man to the moon as well as its capacity for nuclear annihilation.

Some of the earliest works in the exhibition highlight Kogelnik’s fascination with the technological advances made in computing. Created with body tracings and anatomical stamps, these works dating from the mid- to late-1960s show android-like figures intermingled with circuit boards, wires and pieces of machinery. Not only do these works reflect the innovations (and imaginations) spurred on by the digital revolution of the 1950s and 1960s, but they also emphasize Kogelnik’s interest in fields where women were largely excluded or marginalized.

In the 1970s, Kogelnik began making a series of paintings using imagery appropriated from fashion advertisements, thereby issuing a critique of the representation of femininity by mimicking its very archetype in the mass media: stylish consumers of fashion who, in their statuesque poses, become themselves objects for consumption. In its figurative detail and adoption of appropriation strategies, works like *Dynamite Darling* represent a distinct departure from the body tracings of the previous decade, where only the silhouette of the human form is given.

The latest piece in the exhibition is a 1986 sculptural installation from her *Hangings* series titled *Divided Souls*. Here, Kogelnik gives three-dimensional form to her tracings, using them as templates for vinyl cutouts suspended from a steel garment rack. Inspired by the racks of clothing being pushed on the streets in front of her Garment District studio, the sculpture is a tongue-in-cheek interpretation of the “hanging of art” while also making a comment on the marketplace of culture and its parallels to the fashion industry. Like most of her work, the polished simplicity of the *Hangings* belie the messy and complex realities they represent, touching upon issues of race, gender, war and violence. Indeed, at a time when the lofty and self-referential practices of Conceptual art were in vogue, Kogelnik’s practice sought to reaffirm art’s ability to reflect and affect reality.

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About Kiki Kogelnik

Kiki Kogelnik instated the movements of European abstract modernism and American Pop art to create a unique, forward-looking oeuvre that addressed new technologies and feminism. Incorporating a variety of often synthetic materials, irony and humor, her paintings and sculptural work typically took their point of departure in the human body, presenting it as variously ebullient, stylized, interchangeable, fragmentary or skeletal.

Born in Austria in 1935, Kogelnik studied at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts before widely traveling through Europe. In Paris, she became involved with a group of American artists including Joan Mitchell and Sam Francis. Following her move to New York in the early 1960s, she abandoned her abstract expressionist style in favor of paintings and assemblages directly inspired by recent advances in robotics and space travel. Working alongside a group of artists loosely associated with the Pop art movement—Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol were among her friends—Kogelnik became widely known for her series of *Hangings*, in which silhouettes of friends were cut out and hung on hangers and rails, or stenciled onto canvas as hollow skin. Later works increasingly addressed fashion in connection to the way women were portrayed in advertisements.

Recent solo museum shows include *Kiki Kogelnik: Inner Life* at Kunsthall Stavanger, Norway (2017); *Kiki Kogelnik: Fly Me to the Moon* at Modern Art Oxford, UK (2015); and *I Have Seen the Future* at Hamburger Kunstverein, Germany (2012). She was the subject of major retrospectives at Österreichische Galerie Belvedere in Vienna in 1998 and at Kunsthalle Krems, Austria in 2013. Kogelnik's work can be found in the permanent collections of prominent museums in Austria, including the Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna; the Albertina, Vienna; the mumok – Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna as well as in the collections of the Louisiana Museum of Art, Humlebaek; the Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.; and the Portland Art Museum, Portland.

About Mitchell-Innes & Nash

Founded by Lucy Mitchell-Innes and David Nash, who previously headed the worldwide Contemporary and Impressionist & Modern Art divisions of Sotheby's, Mitchell-Innes & Nash places exemplary contemporary artists within a historical context, revealing a continuity of ideas and aesthetic virtuosity from the Modern era through the present day.

Mitchell-Innes & Nash's renowned exhibition program, in both their Madison Avenue and Chelsea locations, fosters excellence within artistic practice, while forging an informed dialogue between emerging and established internationally recognized artists. From acclaimed surveys of 20th century masters, such as Jean Arp, Anthony Caro, Jay DeFeo, Leon Kossoff, Kenneth Noland and Roy Lichtenstein, to solo exhibitions of Keltie Ferris, Pope.L, Martha Rosler, and Jessica Stockholder, Mitchell-Innes & Nash has proven expertise in both advancing the careers of emerging artists and maintaining the superior standard set by established artists.

Caption: KIKI KOEGLNIK, *Dynamite Darling*, 1972

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