

HOMAGE TO SHIRLEY JAFFE

May 17 - July 16, 2022

3, rue du Cloître Saint-Merri, 75004 - Paris



Shirley Jaffe, *Untitled*, 1980 ca
Vinyl paint and pastel on paper, 65 × 50 cm

Galerie Nathalie Obadia is delighted to present *Homage to Shirley Jaffe*. This exhibition echoes her retrospective, titled *Shirley Jaffe, Une Américaine à Paris*, which is taking place at the Centre Pompidou from April 20 to August 29, 2022; will then travel to the Kunstmuseum in Basel (March 25 to July 30, 2023); and finish its journey at the Musée Matisse in Nice (October 11, 2023 to January 8, 2024).

Homage to Shirley Jaffe will present a group of works on paper by Shirley Jaffe, alongside works by **Carole Benzaken, Pierre Buraglio, Robert Kushner, Bernard Piffaretti, Fiona Rae, Jessica Stockholder and Claude Viallat**. The exhibition intends to celebrate the dynamic friendship that linked Shirley Jaffe to these artists - sometimes over several decades, proof of the influence that her work had on younger generations. Upon her death in 2016, Shirley Jaffe left behind her a body of work that made a lasting impression on artists who continue, today, to appreciate her meticulous compositions, her intuitively colored palette, the coherence of her subject matter and the rigor of a life obstinately dedicated to painting.

During her last year of studies at the Beaux-Arts in Paris, Carole Benzaken met Shirley Jaffe, who had been invited to participate in a series of round tables. The artist's liberated tone coupled with her extreme rigorousness made an impact on the young student: a dialog between these two women from different generations began. Thanks to Carole Benzaken, who put Galerie Nathalie Obadia in touch with Shirley Jaffe, 1999 marked the beginning of an intense period of collaboration.

While Pierre Buraglio met Shirley Jaffe at Galerie Jean Fournier, the artist's kindness toward him soon extended beyond the context of the gallery and into a more intimate sphere, and their frequent visits were the breeding ground for their prolific conversation. «*What she appreciated in my work, was, I'm sure, the undeniable silence, the modesty of the means I used [...]*,» writes Pierre Buraglio, as is evidenced in *Fenêtres*, 1988-2009 and 1990-2014.

Deeply moved by a work he'd seen in 1976, it was not until 1982 that Bernard Piffaretti met Shirley Jaffe, also through Jean Fournier. Between them, there was a friendly complicity, which was also fed by their shared considerations on questions relating to painting. The works *Sans Titres*, 1989 and 2002, attest to this lasting and reciprocated respect.

Robert Kushner met Shirley Jaffe in New York, in 1975. They carried on a fruitful transatlantic conversation, which led to them collaborating at Holly Solomon Gallery, a major proponent of *Pattern & Decoration*, of which Kushner was one of the founding members. While Shirley Jaffe's paintings were not related to this movement, the latter certainly counts among her most devoted supporters in the United States – due to their friendship and to Robert Kushner's very high esteem for her work.

Shirley Jaffe's intractability and discipline were well respected, and Fiona Rae approached her work from the perspective of painting. The «*proposal and resolution of visual problems*»; the allusions, ruptures and obstacles; the tension; a balance that is continually questioned: everything seems to point to perfect command, which was not her intention. Rather, Shirley Jaffe suggests «*a nascent reality*,» a preoccupation that also espouses painter Fiona Rae's considerations, in *Untitled (orange, purple and green)*, 1995, and *Rodeo*, 2001.

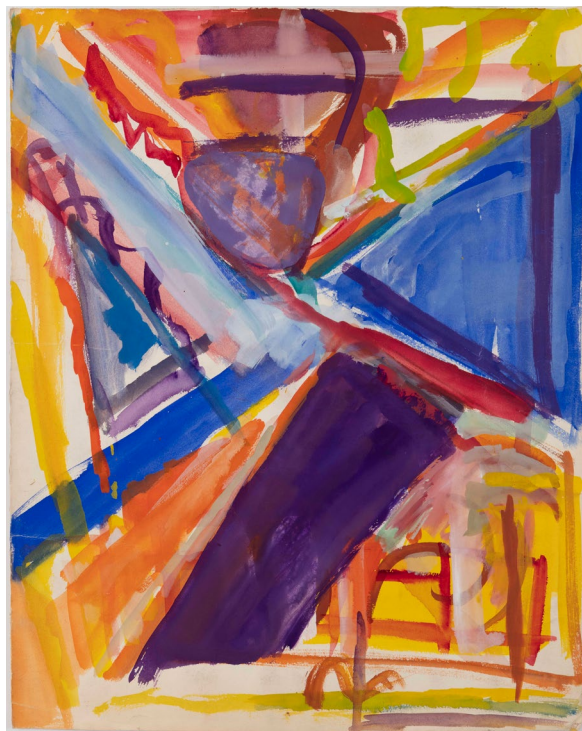
While she truly admired the quality of Shirley Jaffe's constantly renewed compositions, flat graphic shapes and illusions of space, Jessica Stockholder was especially impressed by «*her exploration of the relationship between painting and writing,*» where she sees «*a dialogue through her use of line and plane.*» The work *#879 Carpet/rug Kathmandu*, 2020, suggests a reflection on representation and the materiality of weaving, especially in the way light touches the artwork's body differently from every angle.

An unwavering friendship linked Shirley Jaffe and Claude Viallat – founder of the *Supports/Surfaces* movement, present here with *Sans titre n°101*, 2020. The formal radicality that is at work in their respective explorations and the constant integrity that characterized their artistic proposals determined the high regard in which they held each other for over 50 years.

Publications

The exhibition Shirley Jaffe, *Une Américaine à Paris* is accompanied by a catalog published by Bernard Chauveau Édition in co-publication with the Centre Pompidou, bringing together texts by **Svetlana Alpers, Claudine Grammont and Frédéric Paul** as well as an unpublished interview by **Robert Kushner**.

After the three volumes devoted respectively to Martin Barré, Simon Hantaï and James Bishop, ER Publishing has published *Transatlantique - Shirley Jaffe* bringing together, according to the collection's formula, essays and testimonies by **Polly Apfelbaum, Pierre Buraglio, Alain Clément, Shirley Kaneda, Robert Kushner, Marielle Paul, Hugo Pernet, Bernard Pifaretti and Fiona Rae**.



Shirley Jaffe, *Untitled*, 1967-1970 ca.
Mixed media on paper, 64,5 × 50 cm

Born in 1923 in New Jersey (USA), Shirley Jaffe worked and lived in Paris until her death, on September 29th, 2016.

Jaffe graduated from the Cooper Union School in New York (1945) and the Philips Art School in Washington (1949).

She moved to Paris where she lived until her death at the age of 92, leaving in 1949 the United States where she would still exhibit regularly. A close friend of Sam Francis, Joan Mitchell, Jean-Paul Riopelle and Al Held, Jaffe first came to be known in the art scene for her abstract expressionist work. She broke away from an expressionist abstract and gestural style in 1963-1964 after a residency in Berlin with the Ford Foundation, adopting instead a colourful, geometric style.

Considered one of the most influential painters in contemporary abstract art, she caught the attention of artists from younger generations, such as Shirley Kaneda and Bernard Piffaretti. She was also very well-respected from artists such as Jessica Stockholder, Claude Viallat, Fiona Rae, Carole Benzaken, Amy Sillman, Charline von Heyl and Stanley Whitney.

A major traveling solo exhibition will be held at the Centre Pompidou (Paris) in 2022, then at the Kunstmuseum (Basel) and the Musée Matisse (Nice) in 2023.

After a state commission in 1999, she designed stained-glass windows for the chapel Funeraria of Perpignan in southern France. Her work is collected by many prestigious public and private collections, notably at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA), the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the MAC/VAL in Vitry, the Fondation Cartier for Contemporary Art in Paris, the Museum Berardo in Lisbonne.

Galerie Nathalie Obadia has devoted four exhibitions to Shirley Jaffe, in 1999, 2001, 2008 and 2013.

Shirley Jaffe has been represented by Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels since 1999.

The Estate of Shirley Jaffe was entrusted to Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels, in 2016, after the artist's death.

Paris Saint-Honoré

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Shirley Jaffe

Hommage to Shirley Jaffe

May 17 - July 16, 2022

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The Traveler Walking On Tiptoes

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Paris Cloître Saint-Merri II

Shahpour Pouyan

249 kilometers by 68 meters

May 17 - July 16, 2022

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