

**KATHARINA
GROSSE**

**WHY THREE TONES DO
NOT FORM A TRIANGLE**

Exhibition Facts

Duration	1 November – 1 April 2024
Opening	31. October 2023 6.30 pm
Venue	Column Hall
Curator	Angela Stief
Co-Curator	Martina Denzler
Catalogue	Available for EUR 32,90 (English & German) onsite at the Museum Shop as well as via https://shop.albertina.at/en/
Contact	Albertinaplatz 1 1010 Vienna T +43 (0)1 534 83 0 info@albertina.at www.albertina.at
Opening Hours	Daily 10 am – 6 pm Except Wednesday and Friday 10 am – 9 pm
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Katharina Grosse

Why Three Tones Do Not Form A Triangle

1 November – 1 April 2024

The paintings of Katharina Grosse captivate viewers with their power and intensity of color. She pursues the nonlinear, the multidimensional, and the multilayered. Grosse's thinking, like that of the proverbial "savage mind," is experimental and unpredictable. Expansion and constant transgression of boundaries as well as freedom and autonomy are the cornerstones of this oeuvre. The artist, who was born in Freiburg im Breisgau in 1961 and now lives in Berlin and New Zealand, is interested in how the painted image impacts our society today, in how it can become present at a specific site. Her paintings and installations manifest a coloristic force, transcend the classical rectangular format of the canvas, emphasize and counter their physical settings as vibrating fields of color crossing entire buildings, objects, and wide expanses in the public realm. Grosse employs a spraying technique in order to realize her paintings on the most varied surfaces and materials with fine mists of color, subtle color gradients, and hard transitions. A near-endless flow of paint enables her to apply it over long distances without ever having to lay down her tool.

For the ALBERTINA Museum, Katharina Grosse has created an accessible painting that extends across the walls on sheets laid in folds, also bleeding onto the floor and the ceiling to claim the entire space. Being the site of the painting process as such, this space becomes an expanded canvas—with art thereby rendered physically and psychologically tangible. Katharina Grosse chooses ways and means for her painting to renew traditional aesthetics and expand canonized repertoires of color and form. In doing so, her transcendence of the white cube and engagement with architectural history via expanded painting is significant. The artist's idea of translating the atelier into an exhibiting situation also places the acts of producing and viewing art in a closely interlaced relationship. It is in being processual and unfinished that an exhibition thus actually does become a place of encounter. In the mutual reflection of presentation and painterly execution, an artistic synthesis emerges that is itself

realized in layers, energy fields, markings, projection surfaces, interstices, voids, gradients, transitions, mixtures, and contrasts.

Does Grosse emphasize the primacy of the visual with the lyrical exhibition title "Why Three Tones Don't Form a Triangle"? Or does she find in her art the lowest common denominator between seeing and hearing, dot and sound? What is heard can only be perceived temporally linear, tends to blur and fade, is less enduring, more performative, and prone to loss. In contrast, the aesthetics of Katharina Grosse's painting pursue non-linearity, multidimensionality, and complexity.

Exhibition Text

Expansion and the permanent transgression of boundaries, freedom and autonomy, nonlinearity and multidimensionality are the cornerstones of Katharina Grosse's oeuvre. Her paintings and installations both emphasize and counteract the site: Vibrating color formations cover entire architectures, objects, and vast areas of public space. Using the spraying technique, the artist realizes her paintings on a wide variety of surfaces and materials with fine mists of color, subtle gradations, and sharp contrasts.

For the Albertina Museum, Grosse, who lives and works in Berlin and New Zealand, has created a walkable painting that extends across the walls, transparent sheets laid in folds, the ceiling, the floor, and the entire space. She makes art a physical and psychological experience. The artist's idea of transforming the studio into an exhibition situation also means that the activities of making and viewing art are closely intertwined. An exhibition becomes a place of encounter in a processual and unfinished state.

Q&A

Katharina Grosse: Why Three Tones Do Not Form a Triangle

Q: One has the impression of being a witness to the creation of the works, as we also get to see what lies outside the canvas.

Katharina Grosse: In this exhibition, I condense aspects that are important to me in working on my more recent studio paintings, as if pointing a burning glass at them.

I want to achieve a change of view – away from the limited field of the canvas towards what lies outside its borders. The peripheral, the waste, the discarded, the surplus, the incidental or that which does not belong to the painting, the architecture, the viewer – all these things can become part of the work. I am concerned with expanding painting's field of possibilities.

Q: Expanding painting into the physical space of the viewer?

Katharina Grosse: My bodily intelligence responds better to a tactile surface. I think there are so many images in our lives that come from homogeneous surfaces: from the screen, from photography, from our phones. I think tactile images or multilayer images like painting provide a different kind of knowledge, maybe one that is even more authentic.

My painting is not homogeneous, its pictorial space is permanently interrupted (or perforated?) by physical space. I am interested in this kind of interruption (or pictorial disturbance?) that happens e.g. in the folds of the foil or the fabric, in the doorway between the exhibition spaces, or in the empty spaces that appear, where a canvas has been re-hung. These elements create a constant sense of movement, the image is simultaneously in its permanent dissolution and its restoration.

Q: How did you arrive at painting as your chosen medium?

Katharina Grosse: I came to painting because I thought it was the most direct medium. It doesn't require a technical apparatus like a camera or a computer to process images. I thought it was the most tactile, visceral, and essential, and I wanted to work in an area that doesn't use language or photography. I wanted to work in an area where something exists before you start to think in language. That's how I discovered that color is also so vital for me.

Another reason is that painting is nonlinear; it has a very unique conception of time. Unlike any other medium it allows us to see different moments in time at once. There is no consecutive, linear movement in painting. All the layers on a colored surface generate a cluster of time. One could also reverse the sequence of past, present, future to the point of nullifying them.

Q: How do you conceive of color in your work?

Katharina Grosse: Color is so important to me because it creates an immediate resonance within you. Before you know it, you have a visceral reaction to it, like a voice in a performance that hits you before you can even discern words or lyrics.

Color can appear anywhere. It is independent from any location; therefore, it has the power to sever usual connections and trespass on territories, anticipated content, beloved preferences, and fixed hierarchies. Color gets to you like how noise, a scent, or taste affects you.

Q: And your palette choice?

Katharina Grosse: I'd say that the most defining aspects of my palette are probably the saturation and artificiality of the colors, which for the most part are straight from the palette of the supplier I buy them from. For many years now I haven't even mixed them. I use maybe three yellows, three reds, three greens, three blues, and a couple of in between—mostly to shift between cold and warm, opaque and translucent—and white. That's basically all.

I prefer to use artificial colors without any clear reference to either site or object. I want to infuse a certain energy or attention or transformational aspect into a situation or space.

The choice of color always has to do with what else is around it, as colors are relational elements; they look a certain way only in relation to something else. But there's no hierarchy. A color can enhance a space or an object in such a multifaceted way. It can turn in any direction at any moment.

Katharina Grosse

Biography

Born in Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany, in 1961, Katharina Grosse has held professorships at Weißensee Kunsthochschule Berlin (2000–2009) and Kunstakademie Düsseldorf (2010–18). Grosse lives and works in Berlin and New Zealand.

Her recent exhibitions and on-site paintings include *Katharina Grosse Studio Paintings, 1988–2022: Returns, Revisions, Inventions* at Kunstmuseum Bern (2023) and at Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis (2022); *Canyon* (permanent from 2022) and *Splinter* (2022) both at Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; *Apollo, Apollo*, at Espace Louis Vuitton, Venice (collateral event of 59th Venice Biennale, 2022); *Chill Seeping from the Walls Gets between Us* at HAM Helsinki Art Museum (2021); *Shutter Splinter* at Helsinki Biennial (2021); *Is It You?* at Baltimore Museum of Art (2020); *It Wasn't Us* at Hamburger Bahnhof–Museum für Gegenwart–Berlin (2020); the two-person show *Mural: Jackson Pollock / Katharina Grosse* at Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2019); chi K11 art space, Guangzhou, China (2019); *The Horse Trotted Another Couple of Meters, Then It Stopped* at Carriageworks, Sydney (2018); *Wunderbild* at National Gallery Prague (2018); *Mumbling Mud* at chi K11 art museum, Shanghai (2018); *Asphalt Air and Hair* at ARoS Triennial, Aarhus, Denmark (2017); *This Drove My Mother Up the Wall* at South London Gallery (2017); *Katharina Grosse* at Museum Frieder Burda, Baden-Baden, Germany (2016); *Rockaway* for MoMA PS1's Rockaway! program, Fort Tilden, New York (2016); *yes no why later* at Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2015); *Seven Hours, Eight Rooms, Three Trees* at Museum Wiesbaden, Germany (2015); *Untitled Trumpet* for the 56th Venice Biennale (2015); and *psychylustro* for Mural Arts Program Philadelphia (2014).

Museum collections include Albertina, Vienna; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; ARKEN Museum for Moderne Kunst, Copenhagen; Baltimore Museum of Art; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Istanbul Modern; K21–Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Kunsthaus Zürich; Kunstmuseum Bern; Kunstmuseum Bonn; Lenbachhaus, Munich; Magasin III, Stockholm; MARE–Muzeul de Artă Recentă, Bucharest; MAXXI–Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Rome; Milwaukee Art Museum; Museum Azman, Jakarta; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas; Pérez Art Museum Miami; Queensland Art Gallery & Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Brisbane; Saarland Museum – Moderne Galerie, Saarbrücken; Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art, Porto; and Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, as well as the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, Washington University in St. Louis.

Among the honors she has received are the Oskar Schlemmer Prize (2014); the Fred Thieler Prize for Painting (2003); the Schmidt-Rottluff Scholarship (1993); and the Villa Romana

Fellowship, Florence (1992). She has been selected by the German federal government as a jury member for the 2020–23 fellowships at Villa Massimo, Rome; Casa Baldi, Olevano Romano, Italy; and Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris. Since October 2021 she has been the chairwoman of the board of KUNST-WERKE BERLIN e. V.

Press images

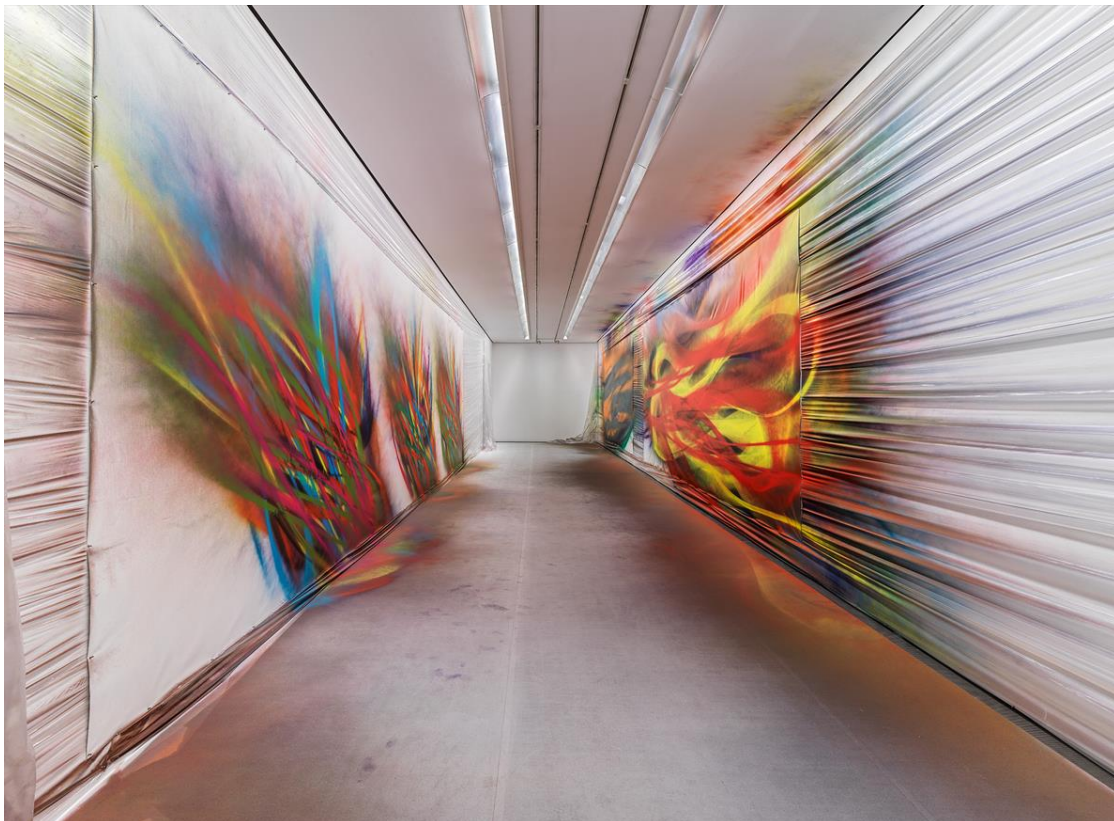
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Katharina Grosse. Why Three Tones Do Not Form A Triangle, 2023
ALBERTINA, Vienna (01.11.2023–01.4.2024), Exhibition view
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