



GREATER LA

Let Rebecca Morris' colors, patterns, lines 'sweep you up' in LA

Hosted by Steve Chiotakis • Oct. 13, 2022

ARTS



Rebecca Morris stands in front of her work, "Untitled, (#04-18), 2018."

Photo by Corbett Dempsey.

Artist Rebecca Morris — who has lived in LA for 25 years — is known for her experimentation, abstraction, and large-format paintings made on the floor instead of a traditional easel. A 21-year retrospective of her work is on view at the Institute of Contemporary Art, LA. It runs through January 15, 2023.

"When we talk about abstraction, we're talking about pictures that don't really refer to anything specific. So it might feel a little intimidating. But to be honest, I think her work speaks for itself in a way. ... Her work just is all about the color, the pattern, the line, and just really letting that sweep you up as a viewer," says Lindsay Preston Zappas, founder and editor-in-chief of Contemporary Art Review Los Angeles.

<https://www.kcrw.com/news/shows/greater-la/city-hall-election-icala/rebecca-morris>



Museum goers take in Rebecca Morris' retrospective on opening night at the Institute of Contemporary Art, LA. Photo by Howard Wise.

A recurring motif in [Morris' work](#) is the grid. "I think Rebecca Morris is very interested in how to organize information on a canvas. And the grid for her becomes a way to contain information to almost create these pictures within pictures and paintings within paintings," says Zappas.

Morris wrote a well-known screed in 2004 called "Manifesto: (For Abstractionists and Friends of the Non-Objective)." Among her exhortations: "Campaign against the literal" and "When in doubt, spray paint it gold."

Zappas says at a recent talk, Morris spoke of another one: "She talked about one line in the manifesto, 'Wake up early, fear death,' and just how true that feels to her. And I think for her, this really relates to how much she wants to get done in a day and in her lifetime. ... I think that just really speaks to what a voracious maker she is."



"I think this particular blue that she uses here is so evocative and emotive," says Lindsay Preston Zappas of "Untitled (#10-20), 2020." Photo by Lee Tyler Thompson.



"I went to an artist talk where she literally just talked about the color pink for like 20 minutes," Lindsay Preston Zappas notes of Morris' use of and reverence for color in her work. Photo by Lee Tyler Thompson.



"Recently, she's been using these textured silver lines that almost look like they've been welded," notes Preston Zappas of "Untitled, (#18-20), 2020." Photo by Lee Tyler Thompson.

<https://www.kcrw.com/news/shows/greater-la/city-hall-election-icala/rebecca-morris>