

Alicja Kwade and Agnes Martin: Space Between the Lines

May 18 – June 29, 2024
1201 S La Brea Ave
Los Angeles



Alicja Kwade, *Gegen den Lauf*, 2022 © Alicja Kwade, courtesy Pace Gallery

Los Angeles – Pace is pleased to present a two-artist exhibition of work by Alicja Kwade and Agnes Martin—co-curated by Kwade and Arne Glimcher, the gallery’s founder—at its Los Angeles space. On view from May 18 to June 29, this show will place works by Kwade, including two new large-scale sculptures, in dialogue with a selection of paintings and works on paper by Martin. This will be Kwade’s first significant presentation of new work in Los Angeles and her first major exhibition with Pace since joining the gallery in 2023.

Kwade is known internationally for sculptures, large-scale public installations, films, photographs, and works on paper that engage poetically and critically with scientific and philosophical concepts. Through a distinctive vocabulary encompassing reflection, repetition, and the manipulation of everyday objects and natural materials, the artist raises questions about structures and systems that govern and shape our daily lives. In her contemplative works, which dismantle boundaries of perception, she challenges commonly accepted ideas and beliefs while proposing new modes of seeing and understanding reality.

The result of a longstanding conversation that Kwade has undertaken with Glimcher around the work of Agnes Martin, who was a close friend of Glimcher and whom he has represented since 1974, the exhibition at Pace’s LA gallery centers on the affinities and intersections between Kwade’s artistic concerns and those of Martin. Although separated by generations, several threads run through both artists’ practices—in particular, their focus on time and temporality as an organizing principle of perceptual experience. These artists also share a fascination with the relationship between truth and beauty. While Kwade’s work is often grounded by a conceptual armature, Martin sought to express a transcendental quietude and purity through painting. For both artists, ordered, mathematical systems, often expressed through their use of line, are integral to their approaches to artmaking. On a formal level, enactments of balance, negotiations of symmetry and non-symmetry, and explorations of liminal, in-between spaces cut across their works.

“For some time, I have been interested in a dialogue between Agnes Martin’s paintings and the sculptures of Alicja Kwade,” Glimcher says of the exhibition, “Both artists have been involved in the possibilities of line, both bring a meditative sensibility, and both are interested in questions of time. Both make works that reveal themselves slowly, with time. I have always felt Agnes’s work is closer to music than it is to traditional painting, and with Alicja, there is a parallel sense of adjacency with other modes of perception.”

Two new large-scaled sculptures by Kwade—which are related to her ParaPivot series—will anchor the exhibition. In these works, titled *Distorted Dream* (2024) and *Distorted Day* (2024), carved stone orbs appear to float within a framework of polished steel plates and powder-coated steel frames, which intersect at oblique angles. Reflecting her interest in ancient astronomy, Kwade’s ParaPivot sculptures suggest imagined solar systems realized in miniature, in which steel supports chart the orbital pathways of planetary bodies. Meanwhile, the artist’s large-scale *Jo’s snow* (2023) sculptures, which consist of sculpted marble forms that naturalistically resemble piles of partially melted snow, will be on view in the gallery’s courtyard, installed across the grassy outdoor space.

Highlights in the exhibition also include Martin’s painting, *The Sea* (2003), the only entirely black painting the artist ever made. In this composition, which Martin produced a year before her death, minutely incised horizontal lines of equal weights are painstakingly carved into the painted surface, producing a humming, vibratory effect reminiscent of flowing water. But Martin’s painting is in no way representational—she was interested, instead, in marking time in her work, creating material and durational encounters between her own body and the canvas. Like Kwade’s sculptures—whose open voids produce shifting views of Martin’s painting as viewers circumnavigate the gallery space—this painting, like the other works of Martin included in the exhibition, celebrates art’s phenomenological and perceptual powers.

Pace’s exhibition in LA coincides with Kwade’s solo presentation at the Voorlinden Museum in the Netherlands, running through June 9. Among other recent presentations around the world, her work figured in the 2022 edition of Desert X AlUla in Saudi Arabia and the 57th Venice Biennale, *Viva Arte Viva*, in 2017.

Alicja Kwade (b. 1979, Katowice, Poland) investigates and questions universally accepted notions of space, time, science, and philosophy by breaking down frames of perception in her work. Kwade’s multifaceted practice spans sculpture, installation, video, and photography. She utilizes quotidian and found objects such as rocks, mirrors, lamps, and clocks to explore profound ideas about the fabric of reality. Kwade’s use of elements such as copper, iron, human-made plastics, and recycled materials reflects her interest in both physics and chemistry, using art to bring core concepts together and examine the phenomena of the physical world. Her works often utilize the alchemical properties of her chosen materials to reveal the nature of the systems we use to understand the world, such as marking time and uncovering the origins of the universe, distilling complex ideas through form, material, and composition. Through her practice, Kwade examines planetary systems, molecular compositions, and mathematical frameworks, challenging conventional modes of thinking and exploring both the physical and metaphysical. While her work is often associated with Minimalism, Kwade approaches her practice with an eye toward Conceptual art.

Important exhibitions of Kwade’s work include *Alicja Kwade: Von Explosionen zu Ikonen* Piepenbrock Förderpreis für Skulptur 2008 WerkRaum. 25, Hamburger Bahnhof, Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin (2008); *Alicja Kwade: Probleme massereicher Körper*, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster, Germany (2010); *Alicja Kwade: Monolog aus dem 11ten Stock*, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin (2015); *Alicja Kwade: Warten auf Gegenwart*, Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland (2014), which traveled to Kunsthalle Nürnberg, Germany (2015); *Perception is Reality - Über die Abbildung von Wirklichkeit und Virtuellen Welten*, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Germany (2017); *Alicja Kwade: Out of Ousia*, Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen (2018); *Alicja Kwade: “Being...”*, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin (2018); *Alicja Kwade: LinienLand*, Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich (2018); *Alicja Kwade: Kausalkonsequenz*, Langen Foundation, Neuss, Germany (2020); *Alicja Kwade: In Abwesenheit / In Absence*, Berlinische Galerie – Landesmuseum für Moderne Kunst, Berlin (2021); *Alicja Kwade: Au Cours Des Mondes*, Place Vendôme, Paris (2022). In 2017, she participated in *Viva Arte Viva*, which was curated by Christine Macel at the 57th Venice Biennale. In 2019, The Metropolitan Museum of Art commissioned her to create *ParaPivot*, which was on view at the roof garden through October of that year. Her work is held in numerous public collections worldwide, including Centre Pompidou, Paris; Kunsthalle Mannheim, Germany; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark; and Wrocław Contemporary Museum, Poland. Kwade lives and works in Berlin.

Agnes Martin (b. 1912, Macklin, Saskatchewan, Canada; d. 2004, Taos, New Mexico), one of the most influential painters of her generation, left an indelible mark on the history of modern and contemporary art. Growing up in western Canada, she moved between New Mexico and New York throughout her early career. For a pivotal decade starting in 1957, Martin lived and worked in Coenties Slip, a neighborhood in lower Manhattan she shared with

emerging artists including Ellsworth Kelly, before returning to New Mexico in 1968. Inspired by the transcendent qualities of paintings by Mark Rothko and Ad Reinhardt, Martin considered herself to be an Abstract Expressionist. Nonetheless, her oeuvre played a critical role in heralding the advent of Minimalism, influencing, among others, Eva Hesse's sculptural practice and Sol LeWitt's wall drawings. Characterized by austere lines and grids superimposed upon muted grounds of color, Martin's paintings elegantly negotiate the confines of structure and space, draftsmanship, and the metaphysical.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon.

Today, Pace has seven locations worldwide, including European footholds in London and Geneva as well as Berlin, where the gallery established an office in 2023. Pace maintains two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace's long and pioneering history in California includes a gallery in Palo Alto, which was open from 2016 to 2022. Pace's engagement with Silicon Valley's technology industry has had a lasting impact on the gallery at a global level, accelerating its initiatives connecting art and technology as well as its work with experiential artists. Pace consolidated its West Coast activity through its flagship in Los Angeles, which opened in 2022. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, along with an office and viewing room in Beijing. In 2024, Pace will open its first gallery space in Japan in Tokyo's new Azabudai Hills development.

Press Inquiries

Sara Fox
Director of Public Relations, US
sfox@pacegallery.com
+1 646 522 5480

Talia Trauner
Public Relations Manager
ttrauner@pacegallery.com
+1 305 778 9349

Emily Kopp
Public Relations Manager
ekopp@pacegallery.com
+1 516 426 4146

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