

MODERN PAINTERS



DOROTHY IANNONE

Anton Kern Gallery

As the ecstatic sexual-revolution-era paintings and sculptures of American-born, Berlin-based artist Dorothy Iannone gain popularity in the States, viewers are finding distilled, potent wisdom in her newest creations as well. "Lioness," her first U.S. institutional exhibition, which ran from late July through mid-October at the New Museum, focused on works from between 1966 and 1986. I preferred the curatorial tack of the concurrent show at Anton Kern Gallery, which used older pieces as context for a living, contemporary whole, including five paintings made since 2007. The newer works share a palette—fiery reds, oranges, and yellows cooled by turquoise and sapphire blues—and in them Iannone's characteristically high ornamentation is calmed by flat white backgrounds of thinly applied acrylic to which the artist gives more prominence than in earlier pieces. The result is a confident, graphic elegance added to her powerful depictions of an active present.

Thematically, the physical and psychological aspects of sexual freedom are still at the forefront of Iannone's work. The *Kama Sutra*-like painting *Metaphor* (2009), depicting a blonde woman standing and smiling while engaged with her partner, who is bent over an African vase, continues the artist's extensive series of sexual portraits of herself with fellow artist Dieter Roth. Her current self-awareness reveals itself in the picture *On the Continuing Journey* (2008), which bears the text "I sigh and wonder if indeed I will ever move from the view in which I find myself today. But not to go on now is death." Looking at these works spanning 40 years, I saw clearly that this is one artist who always chooses "to go on."

—Trinie Dalton

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