

Susan Eley

Fine Art

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 15, 2021

***Three Abstract Artists***

***Jane Ehrlich, Margaret Fitzgerald and A'Driane Nieves***

March 18 – April 29, 2021

46 W 90<sup>th</sup> St, Floor 2, New York, NY 10024



Open by appointment only

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Susan Eley Fine Art is pleased to announce *Three Abstract Artists*, a group exhibition featuring abstract paintings by Jane Ehrlich, Margaret Fitzgerald and A'Driane Nieves. The show opens March 18, 2021 in our Upper West Side gallery and features over two dozen acrylic, oil and mixed media paintings on canvas in a range of sizes.

Fitzgerald first worked with the gallery in 2016 and exhibited her painting *Tortuga* in *TWOXFIVE*. Nieves participated in our 2020 online exclusive show, *AMERICANA Part II*, which highlighted the work of three Black artists. This will be Ehrlich's first time showing with Susan Eley Fine Art. *Three Abstract Artists* will be on view by appointment through April 29. To schedule a viewing, please contact [susie@susaneleyfineart.com](mailto:susie@susaneleyfineart.com).

The Abstract Expressionist movement arose in the US in the 1940s in response to the global chaos of wartime and in reaction to the art historical precedents of representation and realism. While the male artists who pioneered abstraction became household names—Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning and Robert Motherwell, to name a few—the female abstract artists, many painting in parallel— Lee Krasner, Elaine de Kooning, Helen Frankenthaler and others—didn't receive the attention and critical acclaim of their male counterparts during their lifetimes. In the past few years, museums and galleries have forged a corrective course to alter the current perception of AbEx artists and shine a long overdue light onto the work of these legendary women.

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NYC - 46 West 90th Street, Floor 2, New York, NY, 10024 - By Appointment Only

Hudson - 433 Warren Street, Hudson, NY, 12534 - Thursday-Monday, 11AM-5PM

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As a woman-owned contemporary art gallery, one of our missions is to foster the careers of female artists; we host many all-female group and solo shows, most recently *This Land.*, a four-person exhibition in Hudson, NY. We are delighted to now feature the magnificent work of three women abstractionists.

How do we approach, study and enjoy abstraction? Are we expected to find meaning or symbolism in the shapes, patterns and colors? Are we meant to *feel* and react viscerally? These are questions we've been posing since Pollack's first drip paintings.

*Three Abstract Artists* consists of Margaret Fitzgerald's Crayola-colored creations, rendered with bold markings and graffiti-like expression; A'Driane Nieve's canvases, built up with linear, yarn-like strokes in earth tones against white backgrounds; and the contrasting calm, near monochromatic paintings of Jane Ehrlich, softly stacked and woven with layers of translucent tones of orange, pale yellow and green.

Each of the artists have put themselves into their paintings. They have worked through the distress and pain, as well as small victories and joy that the last year has brought. The paintings reflect the unseen and the unpaintable, each functioning as its own self-portrait.

### **A'Driane Nieves**

A'Driane Nieves paints to work through past traumas and the suffering that results from reliving distressing events. By using the act of painting as way to process constructively, her emotional journey throughout the past year is cemented in acrylics, graphite, house paints and soft pastels on canvas. In *No.2* (2021), solid groups of reds, oranges and yellows rest in the background with frenzied, decisive strokes atop in grey, red and teal. Nieves began to layer heavy body acrylic paint in her latest body of work as an ode to the physicality of painting, both the painting as an object and the act of putting brush to canvas. The layers of paint reflect an excavation of sorts, her smaller work wilder and more chaotic than her larger canvases. Thick, white textured shapes in *No.5* (2021) contrast with thinner layers of house paint. For Nieves, working small was/is about survival. Nieves' action paintings are full of angst, energy, anxiousness, earnestness and discovery. Nieves lives and works in the Greater Philadelphia area.

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### **Margaret Fitzgerald**

Margaret Fitzgerald's newest paintings are another example of an artist not unaffected by the pandemic and self-isolation. Her canvases ask the question, "*What is it to be human?*" in a world threatened by environmental destruction and where technology is ever-omnipresent. During the painting process, Fitzgerald lays her canvases on the ground and walks on them while she paints. She alternates between floor and wall, all while brushing, scraping, rolling and dragging her oils. Deep red oil stick meanders around the drop cloth in *Peering Through* (2020). Repetitive blue squares sit atop a thick, white background that also supports forest green gestures. Through this organic practice, Fitzgerald has effectively become a part of the painting. By viewing the paintings as an extension of herself, it becomes impossible to detach art from artist. Fitzgerald will forever be enmeshed in the rich, expressive colors and character of her canvases. The artist, born in the UK, lives and works in Albuquerque, NM.

### **Jane Ehrlich**

In contrast to the work of Nieves and Fitzgerald, Jane Ehrlich's paintings are quieter and more subdued. Starting with a single ground color on canvas, Ehrlich begins the slow process of building up thin layers of white in straight, zigzag and curvilinear lines. Sometimes the paint is applied thickly and other times it is more fluid, resulting in past decisions remaining visible underneath more recent strokes. This method of applying paint informs the viewer of its history and process. The white acrylic brushstrokes in *ORwW* (2020) weave through each other on top of a bright orange background. They snake across the canvas, following paths of planned randomness. Jane notes that "light is elemental to [her] work. As the series continues, the gestures become more simplified, more minimal, the way I like to live." When reflecting on her overall approach, Ehrlich says "I search for a space within my paintings that I can coexist with. I want to be in my space and let the painting live in its own space. I don't want to be overwhelmed. I want to look at the painting and let it evolve, and slowly discover its nuances." Ehrlich lives and works in Hudson, NY.