

eric firestone gallery

Eric Firestone Gallery is pleased to announce its participation in The Armory Show, New York (March 7-10, 2019; Pier 90, Focus Section, booth F-3) with a solo presentation of work by Miriam Schapiro from 1960 to 1976.

Schapiro (1923-2015) struggled for acceptance within the male-dominated world of Abstract Expressionism, nevertheless becoming the first woman artist to have a solo show at André Emmerich Gallery in 1958. Her work of the late 1950s is gestural and painterly, while remaining rooted in the body and experiences of womanhood. By 1960 Schapiro began to include more geometric elements in her paintings, especially the motif of windows and boxes. These "Shrine" paintings, a group of which will be on view, incorporate the form of an egg within rectangular apertures: homages to art history and the female experience.

In 1967, following her move to Southern California, where she and her husband Paul Brach would teach at The University of California, San Diego, she developed a unique vocabulary of forms and processes. She was one of the first artists to explore computer imaging, using it to develop hard-edged, illusionistic geometric abstractions, still rooted in the female body (termed "central-core" imagery).

Schapiro's experimentation did not end there; by 1972, along with Judy Chicago she had founded, the Feminist Art Program at the California Institute of the Arts, and created the legendary installation "Womanhouse." She challenged the dichotomy of "high" art by incorporating decorative art and crafts that were traditionally gendered as female. These became part of works she termed "femme" to denote the continuity of high art collage and work made by anonymous women - which she collected and was given by other artist friends.

Schapiro's work and her history are more relevant now than ever, as historians revisit the women of Abstract Expressionism as well as the Pattern & Decoration movement, with which Schapiro is credited as a central figure.

Schapiro's work is featured in museum exhibitions around the world, including *Pattern and Decoration: Ornament as Promise*, currently on view at MUMOK, Vienna; the upcoming *Less is a Bore: Maximalist Art and Design*, opening in June 2019 at the ICA, Boston; and *Pattern and Decoration*, opening in October 2019 at MOCA, Los Angeles. Last year, an exhibition at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York, examined her legacy.

The select, yet varied group of work on view at The Armory Show will allow viewers to see Schapiro's innovative spirit, and how she re-invented the possibilities of painting in this period.

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