



TAYLOE PIGGOTT GALLERY

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TAYLOE PIGGOTT GALLERY ANNOUNCES NEW EXHIBITION WITH ARTIST WOLF KAHN

Exhibition Dates: 16 December 2019 – 25 January 2020  
Opening Reception: Friday, December 27<sup>th</sup> 2019 | 5-8pm

Taylor Piggott Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of landscape paintings by Wolf Kahn. This exhibition brings together select oil works on canvas and pastel works on paper- spanning the last sixteen years and covering a multitude of sizes, themes, and color palettes by the nonagenarian artist. The exhibition features a grouping of landscapes that highlight the artist's deliberately antithetical subjective process set against the backdrop of the modern language of intentionality. A reception to celebrate this exhibition will be held on Friday, December 27th from 5-8pm. All are invited to attend.

Equal parts explosive and subtle, abstract and representational, intimate and expansive, these works paint Kahn as an artist working at the zenith of his seven-decades-long career. A one-time lumberjack in his youth, Kahn's enthusiasm for trees as subject matter resounds through this exhibition. Eschewing the enormous skies of traditional, formalized landscapes, he focuses instead on the chaotic tangle of vegetation in *Broken River* (2012) and (literally) *Horizontal Tangle* (2010). In *Predominantly Red-Violet* (2017), his sky isn't just diminutive, it barely registers over the rich luminosity of a looming purple-gold old-growth forest. Still, these 'landscapes' are certainly abstracted, trees relegated to variegated vertical lines and branches short, terse horizontal stabs of color. Truly, color is the star of the show, with texture an alluring ingenue, whether in the soft grey luminescence of *Last Glow of Fall* (2019) or the "blatant and vulgar" orange that blazes from the canvas in *Purple Ground Fog* (2003), the earliest painting selected for the exhibition.

Perhaps the preeminent colorist of a generation, Wolf Kahn descends from as enigmatic artistic sources as American Realism, Color Field painting, and Abstract Expressionism. It's clear he always made his own rules, and perhaps, as a rule, broke them. A second-generation New School artist following the lions of American Abstraction such as Rothko, Pollock, and de Kooning, among others, Wolf Kahn broke rank by returning to representational painting, mainly of landscapes.

Born in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1927, Wolf Kahn fled at thirteen to London via the *Kindertransport*, and thereon to the United States, where he was eventually reunited with his father, a well-known conductor of the orchestra. In 1945, he graduated from the High School of Music and Art in New York after which he spent time in the Navy. Under the GI Bill, he studied with the well-known teacher and abstract expressionist, Hans Hofmann, becoming Hofmann's studio assistant. In 1950, he enrolled in the University of Chicago as part of the Hutchins Chicago Plan, graduating after only eight months.

He returned to New York, determined to become a full-time artist. He and other former Hofmann students established the Hansa Gallery, a cooperative gallery where Kahn had his first solo exhibition. In 1956, he joined the Grace Borgenicht Gallery, where he exhibited regularly until 1995. In 1960, his work was included in a major exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art titled *Young America 1960: 30 Painters under 36*. Kahn has received a Fulbright Scholarship, a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, and an Award in Art from the Academy of Arts and Letters. His work found in the permanent collections of most major art museums in the United States including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the Whitney Museum of America Art, the National Gallery of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, among others. In addition, Kahn's works regularly form the centerpiece of numerous group exhibitions and solo shows in galleries and museums throughout the United States and abroad.

Still maintaining a vigorous, daily studio practice at age 92, Kahn adheres to a strict non-program program. He is still very much a student of Hans Hofmann. There's an affectionate contrariness about him and the way he describes his work. "I try not to," he says. "I never want to look at it the way an outsider would. There's a certain mystery in making paintings, and I don't want to destroy that. What people think art's about is not always what it's about. Lately, I've decided my painting isn't about describing places or things, it's much closer to just an expression of enthusiasm."

"Art is playing, dancing, spontaneity. Don't intentionally choose a color," he tells his students, "just pick it up."

Media Contacts

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WOLF KAHN, *RIVER BEND*, 2013, OIL ON CANVAS, 36 X 44 IN.



WOLF KAHN, *BROKEN RIVER II*, 2012, OIL ON CANVAS, 36 X 52 IN.





WOLF KAHN, *SLIGHT DECLINE*, 2018, OIL ON CANVAS, 14 X 14 IN.