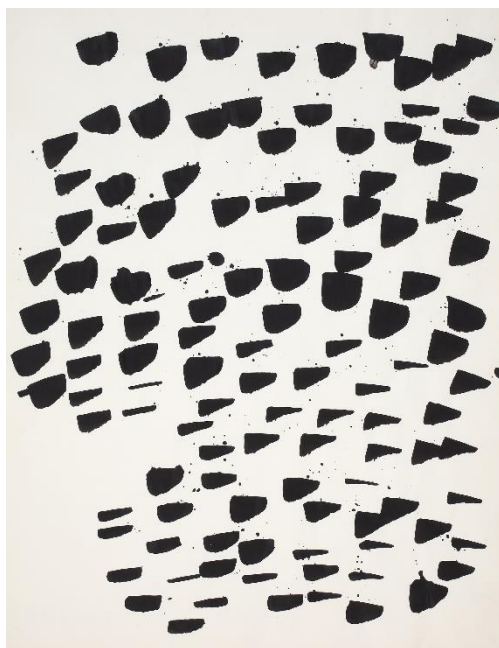


# GALERIE KARSTEN GREVE



Pierrette Bloch, *Untitled*, 1971 – 1972, ink on paper, 65 x 50 cm / 25 2/3 x 19 2/3 in.  
Courtesy of Galerie Karsten Greve Paris, Cologne, St. Moritz. Photo: Adam Rzepka, Paris.

## *Femmes · Frauen · Women*

**Pierrette Bloch · Leiko Ikemura · Lucia Laguna · Catherine Lee  
Claire Morgan · Georgia Russell · Luise Unger**

25th February to 29th April 2023

Opening Saturday 25th February 2023 from 6pm to 8pm

Galerie Karsten Greve is celebrating seven of its emblematic artists in a new group exhibition. *Femmes·Frauen·Women* features works by Pierrette Bloch, Leiko Ikemura, Lucia Laguna, Catherine Lee, Luise Unger, Georgia Russell and Claire Morgan, and showcases a diversity of techniques that each artist explores in her own unique way. The exhibition reveals what lies at the very heart of their artistic endeavours where rhythm, colour and temporality act as points of convergence for these three generations of artists whose selected works question the contradictions of our times: the natural and the artificial; the interior and the exterior; the unique and the repetitive; the familiar and the strange.

**Pierrette Bloch's** (b.1928, Paris - 2017, Paris) pioneering approach is based on the reiteration of the gesture itself. For more than sixty years, the dot, the line and the relationships established with the surface according to her chosen material constituted the founding axis of her work. Black ink is dominant in her compositions: it marks the support (often paper) and vibrates with its infinite range of nuances, welcoming accidents - a drop of water too much or too little, a hesitation in the brushstroke and pressure from the hand infinitely transform the finished result. The selection of works offers an overview of forty years of Bloch's career, from 1977 to 2017. "*I have sought to draw the passing of time all of my life, I think...*". Bloch's focus on the present moment transforms her works into adventures of the mind where the seeming repeated gesture emphasises diversity as opposed to steady regularity. It is a temporality linked to the present moment and to spontaneity.

**Catherine Lee's** (b. 1950, Pampa, Texas) reducible abstractions are assembled as grids in a set of rhythmic, abstract patterns. The American artist discusses her fascination with abstraction in painting (among other mediums): "*My work is always serial, always repetitive; it is like a mark of time, like a reminder of being in the world.*" The individual cells of her paintings in the *Quanta* series, which began in the 1970s, are filled with colour using multiple methods. The successive application of layers of colour evokes the automatic and regular rhythm of breathing: the brushstroke becomes an existential gesture. As time is divided

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into units that add up to hours, days and months, each square is as similar as it is different. The sculptures, created in the mid-1990s, are attached to places by their titles - *Yosemite, Xocche, Zuider Zee* or *Dozule* - and evoke prehistoric carved stones.

This attachment to place can also be seen in the work of **Lucia Laguna** (b. 1941, Rio de Janeiro), whose pictorial language combines both the natural and the strange. The true magic of Laguna's work reveals itself in the viewer's interpretation of the mysterious details that inhabit the multiple layers in her work. Laguna succeeds in capturing all the richness of her surroundings such as her garden (in the paintings entitled *Jardim*), but also the city of Rio de Janeiro which she observes from her studio. Masterful juxtapositions of both organic and geometric forms create the impression of constant movement and change where views of interiors and exteriors collide. Her compositions appear as palimpsests of the most diverse objects and landscapes where figurative and abstract elements mix and melt into each other. Her paintings are as expressive and energetic as they are light and fluid, imbued with a bright atmospheric luminosity.

"I cut and slash the paper and play with gradations of shades, rhythmized by the motions of my incisions, through which light filters in," **Georgia Russell** (b. 1974, Elgin) said of her work. Her surgically precise gestures require mastery and patience: "I change the blades every five minutes because, beyond that, the blade is no longer efficient." By incising surfaces, she creates a mirage between reality and illusion. Inspired by nature and its incessant metamorphosis, Russell relates her most intimate reflections on the disruption of this nature through human intervention. *Tradition Orale*, a lacerated canvas sculpture from 2016, appears as a totemic form. Totems were a way for the artist to learn the French language after arriving in France from Scotland.

German artist **Luise Unger** (b. 1956, Bad Saulgau) immerses herself in a creative process that gives rise to forms that are as architectural as they are anthropomorphic, where intangible silhouettes create the illusion of dark shadows. Levitating or resting on a base, her intricate creations reveal a space to the observer where several transparent layers delimited by metal wire outline the transition between interior and exterior. The transparency created by this metallic network breaks the seams of the outer envelope: thus, the invisible becomes visible, and perceptions become illusions. It is through this process that Luise Unger plays with the transitions between different states, weaving together forms that seem to be in a constant state of weightlessness.

**Claire Morgan's** (b. 1980, Belfast) work explores the ambivalence of human beings in their relationship with nature. *Nerve Ending*, 2023, takes inspiration from her previous work presented in Paris in 2022, where the artist further develops her research into violence and vulnerability. The stoneware form is undeniably reminiscent of a tooth, but the interplay of scale and surface allows Morgan to present it as a corporeal, organic entity. Her works on paper, as delicate as they are brutal, revolve around the relationship between animals and humans in today's world, emphasising the tension between the organic and the artificial. Through her work, Claire Morgan invites the viewer to consider the possibilities that may arise from "*things that could have happened, or things that could still happen.*"

**Leiko Ikemura** (b. in Tsu, Mie) left her native Japan for Europe at the age of twenty-one, where she studied art and literature. Ikemura has lived in Spain, Switzerland and finally Germany, where she still resides, and her impressive and eclectic oeuvre could be described as the encounter between East and West. The various themes and techniques, from painting to ceramics, are strongly linked to the earth and nature, but are also imbued with a mystical force that evokes imaginary worlds - particularly those of the myths and legends of the Land of the Rising Sun. *Lying Pink* and *Pink Clouds*, two works from 2019, are compositionally reminiscent of *yamato-e*, while retaining elements of Western landscape painting. Ikemura's art addresses subjects as far-reaching as the cycle of life, multiculturalism, and sexuality. She considers art as a means to challenge "our world of dualisms" in order to transcend its limitations. "*Imagination is the strongest force in my work,*" says the artist. It is precisely through Ikemura's unique imagination that the viewer is invited to journey through her poetical depictions, both familiar and disconcerting.