

VAN DOREN
WAXTER

Marsha Cottrell

September 8 – October 23, 2021
23 East 73rd Street | 2nd floor



Marsha Cottrell, *Untitled*, 2021, laser toner on paper, unique

Van Doren Waxter is delighted to present a solo show of Marsha Cottrell's recent work, on view from September 8 – October 23, 2021. The exhibition will be her third with the gallery and includes recent work on paper – featuring the artist's inaugural use of color, presented alongside her well-known black and grayscale oeuvre. Central to the show are intimately scaled geometric abstractions made using a computer and desktop printer. Also included are direct imprints of organic forms—a hand, grass—evidence of the body and natural world preserved in toner. The letter-sized office-paper format, detached from its original purpose, appears throughout the exhibition as a modular unit in paired and grouped works, and assumes a floating, object-like presence in select new work in color.

While employed as a magazine freelancer in the late 1990s, Cottrell established her innovative use of an office computer and electrostatic laser printer, maneuvering the prosaic apparatus to function as a mark-making tool. In work of the past several years, vector-based lines and shapes found in the software tool palette are printed in layers of carbon-based toner onto sheets of handmade paper, creating one-of-a-kind works that traverse drawing and printmaking, painting, and photography. The relationship between body, computer screen and digital realm has been instrumental in Cottrell's work: symmetry, intensity of focal point, and a distinct vibrational energy reflect a one-on-one relationship with the computer monitor and the space within and beyond it.

Central to the show is a 10-part arrangement of 8-1/2 x 11-inch images comprising one piece that advances Cottrell's exploration of the sublime in abstract, open-ended imagery. Space and light here are more indeterminate. A faint glow emanates from the picture plane, through the toner itself and exposed areas of translucent paper. Fewer passes through the printer, using nearly empty or recycled cartridges, reveal horizontal and vertical striations. The texture and corporeality of paper fiber and toner dust—fused with heat and pressure—is situated in stark contrast to the immaterial nature of the digital workspace. *Untitled (Dots Pair)* plays with the viewer's perception; printer "errors" in *Untitled (Exit)* lend the diptych a narrative-like sense of movement between its pages.

A meditative stillness occupies the space between viewer and image in a new series of work made by the artist using an archival pigment printer. Here, Cottrell layers transparent color onto rectangular areas of digital ground that have been applied by hand within larger sheets of mitsumata paper. The luminous pigment, sometimes overlaid with subtle grids or lines, interacts with the brushstrokes beneath it. As in her black and white work, intermittent scuffs or bent corners highlight the analog mechanism's fallibility. Irregularities in the handmade paper itself—including wide, sweeping strokes that bear evidence of the paper making process, and which can only be detected by viewing the work in person—surround the suspended and subtly-dimensional fields of color.

Marsha Cottrell was born in 1964 in Philadelphia, PA, educated at Tyler School of Art (BFA) and UNC Chapel Hill (MFA), and currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Cottrell's solo exhibitions include Contemporary Art Museum (CAM) Raleigh, NC (2019); Anthony Meier Fine Arts, San Francisco (2016); Eleven Rivington / Van Doren Waxter, NY (2018, 2015); Petra Rinck Galerie, Dusseldorf (2017, 2012); Henry Urbach Architecture, NY (2003); g-module, Paris (2003); Derek Eller, NY (1998); and Revolution Gallery, Detroit (2000). The artist has received fellowships and grants from Anonymous Was A Woman; The Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation; Pollock-Krasner Foundation; New York Foundation for the Arts; and John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. Cottrell's work is included in the collections of The Art Institute of Chicago, IL; Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, TX; Museum Kunstpalast, Dusseldorf; The Morgan Library & Museum, NY; The Museum of Modern Art, NY; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; North Carolina Museum of Art, NC; Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; and Francis Young Tang Teaching Museum at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY.

Gallery Information

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