



**FRIEZE
ART
FAIR**

Harmony Hammond, *Fraggle*, 2014, oil and mixed media on canvas, 48.5h x 58.5w in (123.19h x 148.59w cm)

May 14 – 17, 2015 | Main Galleries Section | Stand D21 | Randall’s Island, New York

Harmony Hammond: Near Monochrome

Alexander Gray Associates presents recent and historical paintings by Harmony Hammond (b.1944), highlighting the artist’s long-standing commitment to process-based abstraction. On view will be examples of her 1970s “Weave Paintings” series and recent work that together represent what the artist calls “near monochrome” paintings. This body of work purposely invites content by positioning the painting as a site of negotiation between what exists inside and outside the picture plane. For Hammond, abstraction does not preclude social engagement, as she states, “I make large thickly painted near-monochrome paintings. While these paintings engage with (and I like to think, interrupt and resist), the history of modernist painting—and more specifically, narratives of abstraction and monochrome—they come out of post-minimal and feminist concerns with materials and process rather than modernist reduction.”

Hammond’s “Weave Paintings,” created between 1975 and 1977 while living in New York, occupy a space where painting and sculpture merge, cementing the artist’s continuous exploration of formal concerns while insisting on the political nature of abstraction to investigate what art historian Julia Bryan-Wilson calls “the space of the between.” In *Kypros Born* (1975), Hammond applied successive layers of oil paint mixed with Dorland’s wax, incising the still wet surface with weave patterns. This process of layering and marking the painted surface results in objects that reference and subvert textile traditions in craft and Modernism—from Anni Albers’ Bauhaus experiments to native North American basket-weaving.

Since 1984, Hammond has lived and worked in New Mexico. In her most recent body of work she continues to expand the materiality of the painted surface, emphasizing painting’s relationship to the body and the viewer. Making their New York debut, the canvases of *Fraggle* (2014) and *Spillway* (2014) are wrapped with pierced and grommeted straps, then painted in layers of oil and wax until it is difficult to discern sequence, materiality, or gesture, evoking a body simultaneously restrained and emancipated. As curator Tirza True Latimer states, their “imposing scale and muscularity contribute to this sense of physical negotiation.” Rather than existing in their own self-referential sphere as espoused by the modernist ideal, these paintings extend beyond the flatness of the canvas and directly confront the viewer.

Hammond is widely recognized as a leader in the fields of Feminist and Queer art history and criticism and has recently been honored with the Anonymous was a Woman Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award Women’s Caucus for Art (both 2014), and the College Art Association Award, Distinguished Feminist Award (2013). She is the author of the groundbreaking book *Lesbian Art in America: A Contemporary History* (2000), which won the Lambda Literary Award for Lesbian Studies.

Harmony Hammond has exhibited nationally and internationally in venues such as Rose Art Museum, Waltham, MA (2015); RedLine Art Space, Denver, CO (2014); National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C. (2011); MoMA PS1 (2008); Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City (2007); Neue Galerie, Graz, Austria (2007); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA (2007); SITE Santa Fe, NM (2002); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA (1996); Brooklyn Museum, New York (1985); New Museum, New York (1982); Downtown Whitney Museum, New York (1978); Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, MN (1968); among others. Hammond’s work is in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; the Brooklyn Museum, NY; the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC; the Art Institute of Chicago, IL; the Phoenix Art Museum, AZ; the New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe; the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT, among others.