



THE ART SHOW

ART DEALERS
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Pink Weave, 1975, oil and Dorland's wax on canvas, 24.5h x 24.5w in (62.23h x 62.23w cm)

ADAA: The Art Show

Harmony Hammond: *The Weave Paintings*

February 28 – March 4, 2018

Alexander Gray Associates presents a curated selection of Harmony Hammond's "Weave Paintings" (1973–1977), which embody an intersection of painting and sculpture that remains central to the artist's practice to this day. With this series, Hammond broke new ground, claiming an oppositional space in process-based abstract painting at the height of second-wave feminist activism.

Harmony Hammond moved to New York City in 1969 where she, along with a group of female peers, rejected the historically male-dominated site of painting. Utilizing found fabrics, her earliest works from this period were unstretched acrylic paintings on domestic textiles such as bedspreads and curtains. These gradually developed into sculptural assemblages of painted cloth that hung on the wall or out in space. Hammond was a co-founder of A.I.R., the first women's cooperative art gallery in New York (1972) and *Heresies: A Feminist Publication on Art & Politics* (1976). It was during this early period of advocacy on behalf of female artists that she consciously introduced gendered content into the painting field, with her series of weave paintings. To make these paintings on stretched canvas, Hammond applied successive layers of oil paint mixed with Dorland's wax, incising the still wet surface with three-dimensional weave patterns that include points and burrs of paint. These pieces can appear dangerous to the viewer's touch but are actually quite fragile. Hammond's 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. Hammond writes, "Weaving, of course, implies the grid, and the grid can suggest weaving. If you think of stitching as marking, and marking in gridded space, then before you know it, you are into pattern and decoration...I was always very interested in the notion of the stitching as a repetitive gesture - reflecting the repetition in women's lives - and a connective gesture - a means of piecing together or building 'wholes' out of fragments."

Hammond's creation of tactile surfaces in works such as *Green Veil* (1975) result in what she calls "fugitive" color that is fluid and difficult to place. She asserts these paintings "perform queerly" due to her utilization of mutable and inexact "near monochrome." In her practice, abstraction does not preclude social engagement; her weave paintings epitomize an integration of political content into rigorous formal experimentation, an approach that art historian Julia Bryan-Wilson describes as "the space of the between." This concurrent embrace and subversion of modernist traditions is apparent in her use of lozenge-shaped canvases in paintings such as *Letting the Weather Get In* (1977). As the artist describes, the skin-like surface "was lumpy and bumpy, irregular – presenting the body. When you're incising into

the painting surface, you're incising into the body.... What was happening on the painting's surface with its subtly curved edges, was mirrored in the shape." Hammond's recent near-monochrome canvases that are pieced, punctured, sutured, wrapped and bandaged, expand upon the incised patterned surfaces of these pioneering earlier "Weave Paintings."

A survey exhibition of Harmony Hammond's work is scheduled to open in 2019 at The Aldridge Museum of Art, CT. Hammond's artwork has been exhibited nationally and internationally in venues such as Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY (2017); New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe, NM, (2016); Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung, Ludwig, Vienna, Austria (2016); Rose Art Museum, Waltham, MA (2015); Museum Brandhorst, Munich, Germany (2015); RedLine Art Space, Denver, CO (2014); National Museum of Women in the Arts, in Washington, D.C. (2011); MoMA PS1 (2008); Vancouver Art Gallery, Canada (2008); Museo de Arte Contemporaneo 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 collections of the Whitney Museum of Art, New York; 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; and the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT, among others. Her archive is in the permanent collection of the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, CA. She has received fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim, Joan Mitchell, Pollock-Krasner, Esther and Adolph Gottlieb and Art Matters Foundations, the New York State Council on the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts, among others. Hammond's book, *Wrappings: Essays on Feminism, Art and the Martial Arts*, (TSL Press, 1984) is considered a seminal publication on 1970's feminist art. Her groundbreaking book *Lesbian Art in America: A Contemporary History* (Rizzoli, 2000) received a Lambda Literary Award, and remains the primary text on the subject. In 2013, Hammond was honored with The College Art Association Distinguished Feminist Award. She received both the College Art Association's Women's Caucus for Art Lifetime Achievement Award and Anonymous was a Woman Award in 2014.