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Press Release

Mary Heilmann. Works on Paper

Hauser & Wirth Zurich, Limmatstrasse
26 September – 20 December 2025



Mary Heilmann returns to Hauser & Wirth's Zurich gallery on Limmatstrasse with an exhibition of more than 30 drawings made between 1975 and 2005. Expanding on the artist's exhibition of works on paper, 'Daydream Nation', at Hauser & Wirth New York last year, this presentation continues the recent in-depth exploration into Heilmann's long-standing drawing practice and coincides with the release of a new publication from Hauser & Wirth Publishers, 'Mary Heilmann. Works on Paper: 1973–2019.'

Raised in San Francisco and Los Angeles, Heilmann (b. 1940) completed a degree in literature, before receiving her M.A. in ceramics and sculpture at the University of California, Berkeley. Only after moving to New York in 1968 did she begin to paint and in the early 1970s she established a drawing practice that continues to this day.

About the exhibition

Ranging from watercolor studies to paintings on paper in their own right, 'Mary Heilmann. Works on Paper' brings together a selection of rarely and never-before-seen drawings that fluctuate in scale and materiality. The exhibition is a celebration of Heilmann's talent for translating complex images and ideas into deceptively simple geometric forms and abstract gestural marks.

Many of Heilmann's most well-known and admired series—Fans, Chairs, Serapes, Grids—are represented in the installation, as are drawings that have related works in important European museum collections. 'Untitled Watercolor Study' (ca. 1983–1986) is one of two drawings in the exhibition that are part of a series of works by Heilmann in tribute to the Dutch painter Piet Mondrian, which also includes 'M.' (1985), a painting in the collection of the Museum Kunstpalast. 'Islands', (1988), one of the larger watercolors on view, was made after 'Laurens' (1986), an oil on canvas in the collection of the De Pont Museum.

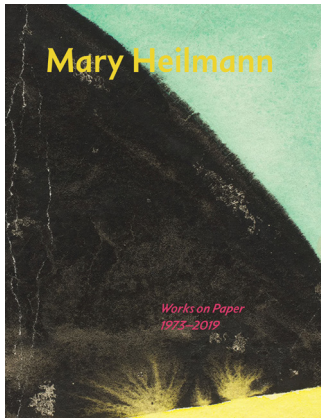
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The works on view not only demonstrate Heilmann's work serially but also her tendency to revisit and reimagine certain arrangements of form and color. Made 15 years apart, 'Broken Study' (2005) is a recompilation of an early red, black and white composition, 'Untitled Watercolor Study' (ca. 1989), and Heilmann's web imagery seen in 'Blue Net' (1991).

As an artist known for working across mediums and for installations that playfully combine disparate works, the exhibition also includes a selection of ceramic 'Spots' and sculptural chairs.

Hauser & Wirth Publishers



Mary Heilmann: Works on Paper, 1973–2019

English Paperback
26 x 20 cm; 152pp
£32 / \$38 / €35
16 September (UK, ROW & US)
Text by Alexis Lowry, Jo Applin, Ilana Savdie

An in-depth study of Mary Heilmann's mesmerizing works on paper that explores drawing as a form of daydreaming and memory-making for the influential abstract painter.

Mary Heilmann's works on paper are suffused with the same sensibility as her influential abstract paintings, a casual playfulness animating a rigorous attention to form and colour, resulting in joyful, evocative geometries. Their suggestive power reflects Heilmann's process of what she calls 'daydreaming': a conjuring of the sights, sounds, and events of past and future travels, the cyclical nature of memory informing her return to various motifs across nearly five decades of work. Edited and with an introduction by curator Alexis Lowry, 'Mary Heilmann: Works on Paper, 1973–2019' includes an essay by art historian Jo Applin and a personal reflection by painter Ilana Savdie, all together offering a compelling account of this previously underexamined aspect of Heilmann's practice.

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About the artist

Considered one of the preeminent contemporary Abstract painters, Heilmann is best known for incorporating a fusion of personal and cultural influences and craft traditions into an artistic practice including paintings, ceramics and furniture.

Heilmann is the subject of two major institutional exhibitions, 'Mary Heilmann. Starry Night' at Dia Beacon in Beacon NY and 'Mary Heilmann. Water Way' at Guild Hall in East Hampton NY, both closing in October 2025. On view at the Whitney Museum of American Art until January 2026 is 'Mary Heilmann: Long Line,' a site-specific installation that celebrates the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Whitney Museum's downtown building.

Her work is included in many prominent international collections, such as those of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany.

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Hauser & Wirth Zurich

Limmatstrasse

Limmatstrasse 270, 8005 Zürich

Gallery hours:

Tuesday to Friday

11 am – 6 pm

Saturday

11 am – 5pm

www.hauserwirth.com

Caption and courtesy:

All images:

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Gallery, New York

Mary Heilmann
Tea Garden
1984
Watercolor on paper
76.2 x 55.9 cm / 30 x 22 in
Photo: Thomas Müller

Mary Heilmann
Untitled Watercolor Study
ca. 1986-1988
Watercolor and pencil on paper
12.7 x 17.5 cm / 5 x 6 7/8 in
Photo: Thomas Müller

Mary Heilmann
Untitled Watercolor Study
ca. 1983-86
Watercolor and graphite on paper
17.8 x 12.7 cm / 7 x 5 in
Photo: Genevieve Hanson

Mary Heilmann
Untitled Watercolor Study
ca. 1987-1989
Watercolor and pencil on paper
27.9 x 21.6 cm / 11 x 8 1/2 in
Photo: Genevieve Hanson