

Victoria Gitman

February 15 - March 29, 2020

François Ghebaly is proud to present a solo exhibition of recent paintings by Miami-based painter Victoria Gitman. The exhibition opens with a public reception on Saturday, February 15, 2020 from 6-9pm, and remains on view through March 29, 2020.

Victoria Gitman's paintings—small, seductive oil compositions on board—intertwine the experiences of vision and touch. Depicting vintage fur purses or overlapping swaths of dyed fur down to each individual hair, the works in the exhibition are rendered with painstaking precision yet retain a distinctive warmth, softness and luminosity. Gitman works directly from handbags and other materials sourced from flea markets, vintage stores, and secondhand shops online. By seeking out subjects with geometric patterning and patchwork designs, she creates images in which the formal representations verge on the abstract. Their intimate size, dictated by a one-to-one scale rendering of the fur surfaces, imbues them with a quiet but powerful pull, luring the viewer into a close proximity where the act of seeing becomes charged with tactility.

The exhibition includes two paintings from an ongoing series in which vintage fur purses are set, life-sized, against a ground of solid color, as well as three paintings that introduce a new group of works focusing solely on overlapping layers of fur arranged in minimalist compositions. These are the first paintings for which Gitman created her own arrangements of materials rather than drawing from the found object. Despite their pictorial illusionism, the works equally evoke the high abstraction of twentieth century painters like Kazimir Malevich, Ellsworth Kelly, and Bridget Riley, flipping the relationships between abstraction, objecthood, surface, and scale that drove art historical discourses around Minimalism and its offshoots.

In their exploration of tactile desire, Gitman's paintings bring to the fore the traditional gendering that is implicit in the pictorial experience itself. These works create an alignment between the fur purses and the picture plane, pointing to the implicit identification of the painting's surface as feminine, a site of erotic desire. Gitman exploits the seductive implications of the surface, highlighting the circuits of desire that the painting-viewer relationship entails. Given the paintings' charged seductiveness, the distance between the beholder and picture plane is narrowed. For Gitman, this condensed space and slowed viewing becomes an integral element of her work.

Victoria Gitman was born in 1972 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Her works are held in the public collections of numerous museums, including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA); the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Pérez Art Museum, Miami; the Detroit Institute of Arts; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, among others. In 2015 she was the subject of a mid-career retrospective at the Pérez Art Museum, curated by Réne Morales. Other recent solo exhibitions include Garth Greenan, New York; Tomio Koyama, Tokyo; Las Vegas Art Museum; and Bass Museum of Art, Miami. She lives and works near Miami in Hallandale, Florida.