



Judy Millar
«Push, Pop, Stack!»

A revealing aspect of abstract painting like that of Judy Millar is its minimum referential character. Colors, shapes, and movements cannot be decoded using a canon of signs taken from the world of things but function in a primarily self-referential fashion. Meaning and content are thus conveyed in an abstract system, which Judy Millar seeks to explore in her current works.

The title is taken from computer terminology, and describes a so-called LIFO (last in-first out) method for organizing (abstract) data systems, where the last information that is entered into a system is the first to emerge from it. The instruction “push, pop, stack,” applied to Judy Millar’s painting, can best be observed in her process of creation, which is characterized by multiple acts of application and removal, adding and deleting. Paint is applied to an unmounted canvas lying on the floor, and then once again removed using a scraper, brush, or the artist’s bare hands. This process, repeated several times, leads to the state of reduction that Judy Millar strives for. Each new layer sets itself apart from the previous, allowing no more than a single trace of the painted shapes beneath to shimmer forth. And yet, the accumulation and obliteration of these supposedly non-referential gestures can achieve the level of great tension and presence that marks the “finished” motif. Judy Millar tries to capture precisely how this moment comes about in her latest works by photographing these small-format paintings, and then after a color correction transferring them through a complex grid-point silkscreen technique to much larger formats. The same motif is thus transformed into various states. In the large formats, it is the blow up of two motifs on differently painted canvases that is able to express Judy Millar’s intention with a certain urgency: the significant moment in the genesis of the work in which painting condenses to a statement is not only explained by repetition, but also illuminated in countless possible applications.