

Petra Cortright

borderline aurora borealis

team (gallery, inc.)

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05 March – 11 April 2020
83 Grand Street

Team (gallery, inc.) is pleased to announce a solo show by Petra Cortright. Entitled *borderline aurora borealis*, the exhibition will run from 5 March through 11 April 2020. The gallery is located at 83 Grand Street, cross streets Greene and Wooster, on the ground floor.

For her first solo exhibition at team, Petra Cortright will use the gallery's main room to realize an ambitious installation that expands the layers of a digital landscape painting into physical space. The painting's hundreds of layers, individual and combined, are printed on industrial translucent substrates hung at intervals throughout the space, with pathways through and along the installation that introduce new and ever-expanding opportunities for composition to emerge. Cortright's brand of landscape is chaotic, beautiful, and volatile, marked by abstraction and populated by jagged .jpg shards and swift blossoms of painterly brushwork; working with a pace and agility the digital methods at her disposal afford, the entanglement of mark-making, color, and texture can assume an almost synesthetic effect.

Cortright operates within the vernacular of landscape painting but outside of its classical means and materials, questioning how the haptic and lyrical might be laced within consumer technology, spam-text poetry, and files chosen not in defense of the poor image but in celebration of it. Her painting software of choice is, of course, Photoshop, and her works mine the expressive and unintended potential of its transformations, effects, and malleability. Evolving from earlier non-figurative works that include flash animation gifs and screensavers, in their insistent lightness and nimble fluency Cortright's paintings conjure Jim Hodges and Frankenthaler, and convey the quality of 'breath' highly regarded in Chinese landscape painting.

In the past decade, as internet culture has steadily progressed towards predictive, targeted consumption, content has become a vehicle for formats and platforms rather than the other way around. By contrast, Cortright's sensibility extends from the culture of personalization and customization which characterized fledgling internet culture, a DIY-oriented MO of using the most immediate and accessible means to create and share in ways that subvert rather conform to structure and legibility. The very act of making is a through-line that evolves from the artist's early webcam videos to the most recent paintings that positions the how and why of creative production as a subject in and of itself.

The artist Paul Chan once described Cortright's work as, "[exuding] the disinterestedness that only comes from a form of creating with nothing particular on the line, and this is what affords it a kind of freedom that becomes, in a word, delightful." If they are to be experienced in the work, freedom and delight must also become elemental components of process, and Cortright's practice is built for daily accrual, iterative experimentation,

and open-ended enjoyment. Her practice integrates an array of references and web scraps as well as a constantly growing archive and vocabulary for self-quotation and development; alongside brushes, textures, and images sourced from around the internet, she regularly creates her own array of techniques and tools. Even to those not intimately familiar with the digital means Cortright employs, the virtuosity and technical inventiveness in her paintings is readily apparent; among other qualities, the expanded interplay of mark, implement, and gesture achieved in these paintings corresponds directly to her singular craft and facture.

More broadly, Cortright's practice has consistently negotiated temporality and two-dimensionality, conditions this installation is invested in both preserving and counteracting. Whereas previous projects looked to the printing process for conveying texture, opacity, and dimensionality of digital imagery, this installation entails the use of the material substrate as a means of producing visual effects, and demonstrates a striking pivot in how qualities of light, presence, and substance are expressed. Like the massive .psd painting files whose reams of data remain weightless, the diaphanous textiles and pellicular sheets that occupy the space convey both immateriality and substantiality; light and pigment permeate the material, further complicating perceptions of flatness and volume.

Cortright's challenge in translating digitally-wrought works into a physical state is less the material manifestation of imagery, than it is conveying the distinctly digital navigation of an endlessly evolving visual terrain resistant to a singular final state or form. A feature evident across her painting practice is a diffusion of focal points across the picture plane, allowing for composition to unfold and cohere at multiple points and scales while resisting resolution around a single view. To this end, *borderline aurora borealis* reorients our expectations of resolution, actively destabilizing and multiplying the baseline order of the work, as well as the means by which it is experienced.

Petra Cortright lives and works in Altadena, CA. Her work has been shown on Times Square billboards and numerous solo and group exhibitions at museums and galleries stateside and internationally. This May, her work will feature in MCA Chicago's ".paint," an exhibition of contemporary painting made with digital tools and techniques. Cortright's works are in the permanent collections of The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Pérez Museum, Miami; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Hammer Museum, MOCA, Los Angeles; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; MCA Chicago; BAMPFA, Berkeley, CA; and Rhizome's Net Art Anthology, New York.

For further information and/or photographs, please call 212 279 9219.

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Installation view: *borderline aurora borealis*, 2020, team (gallery, inc.), 83 Grand Street, NY, NY, 10013



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