

PATRICK MIKHAIL GALLERY

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PATRICK MIKHAIL IN MONTRÉAL PRESENTS “LIFELINES” AN EXHIBITION OF NEW PAINTINGS BY ANTONIETTA GRASSI

LIFELINES ANTONIETTA GRASSI

**MONTRÉAL
OCTOBER 13 TO NOVEMBER 24, 2020**

THE ARTIST WILL BE PRESENT ON

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2020
2 P.M. TO 5 P.M.**

* In accordance with Quebec’s public health guidelines, there will be no public artist reception for this event. The gallery is committed to providing a safe environment for visitors and will implement social distancing guidelines.

PATRICK MIKHAIL in Montréal is pleased to present **LIFELINES**, an exhibition of new work by Montréal painter **ANTONIETTA GRASSI**. Originally scheduled for April 2020, the project was postponed and has taken on a greater significance in our current social climate. Grassi’s trademark, thread-like lines have now become lines that serve as coping mechanisms through this unprecedented time of isolation. They are now, more than ever, a lifeline of connections.

In **LIFELINES**, Grassi explores the connections between weaving, computer programming, and painting with references to data processing, analog systems, and textile looms. She highlights their physicality and materiality and how they relate to painting. Grassi is interested in the significant role that women played in early computer programming, and the curious disappearance of that history. The exhibition partly pays homage to Ada Lovelace and Charles Babbage’s work on developing the Analytical Engine (aka the first computer), which was a study in systems and codes—a new language. The relationship between the technology of early programming and the machinery of the textile industry brings forth the important focus for Grassi on the work that women have long been involved with.

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Throughout her career, Antonietta Grassi has been committed to the practice of abstract painting. Her paintings, which at first appear as hard-edged geometric abstractions, are composed of multi-layered, painted surfaces where the touch of the hand is paramount. Grassi paints layered, intuitively derived forms that are intersected by fine, thread-like lines—creating works where textile, architecture, and painting's twentieth century history collide. Through her nuanced and layered palette, she explores color and light to create perceptual spaces that are drawn from memory and imagination. Grassi's work is simultaneously mathematical and painterly, reflecting a process-driven approach that belies the organized compositions of the geometric forms prevalent in the works.

Antonietta Grassi lives and works in Montreal, Canada. She holds a BFA from Concordia University and an MFA from Université de Québec à Montréal (UQAM). Her work can be found in public and private collections, including the Musée National des Beaux Arts du Québec, Groupe Desjardins, Global Affairs Canada, Ontario Archives, the MAACK in Italy, Stewart Hall Public Art Gallery, Yamana Gold, and the Boston Public Library. She has attended residencies at the Banff Centre for the Arts, MASS MoCA, and the Vermont Studio Center. She has been the recipient of numerous grants and awards including the Canada Council for the Arts and the Conseil des Arts et lettres du Québec.

Antonietta Grassi would like to thank the Canada Council for the Arts for their generous support of this project.

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EXHIBITION STATEMENT

In the series Lifelines, Antonietta Grassi explores the connections between weaving, computer programming and painting with references to data processing, analog systems and textile looms. She highlights their physicality and materiality and how they relate to painting.

Ada Lovelace and Charles Babbage's work on developing the "Analytical Engine" (aka the first computer), was a study in systems and codes—a new language. The relationship between the technology of early programming and the machinery of the textile industry brings forth the important focus for Grassi on the work that women have long been involved with.

Grassi is interested in the significant role that women played in early computer programming, and the curious disappearance of that history. There is also a desire in her work for the respect and dignity of the thing; remembering the time of guilds and objects that were well-made by artisans who were well-looked after—the empowerment, esteem, and grace called for by John Ruskin and Robert Morris of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Grassi seeks a move away from our current culture of planned obsolescence and speed, and toward a slower and more contemplative approach. With her slow and mathematical approach to painting, layer upon layer of lines weave connections to her own past and the past of other painters, scientists, programmers, and textile workers.

While at first glance, her work may look like hard-edge abstraction, on closer viewing, it becomes clear that it has a more tactile build. There is the importance of the artist's hand here, and of the time attributed to the process. There is memory, history, meaning, and connection.

And while her work has always been a way to connect, since the onset of the pandemic, the Lifelines project has taken on an even greater role: the lines serve as a coping mechanism through this unprecedented time of isolation. They are now, more than ever, a lifeline of connections.

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