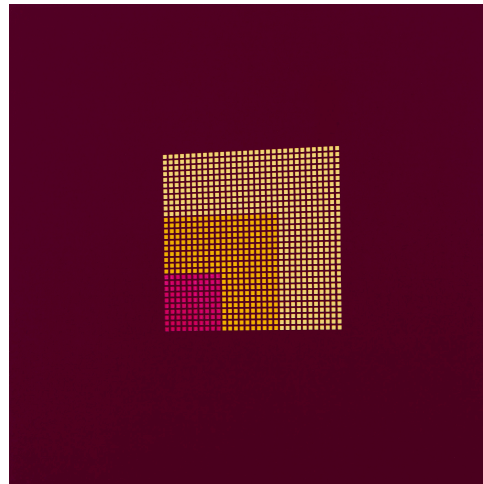
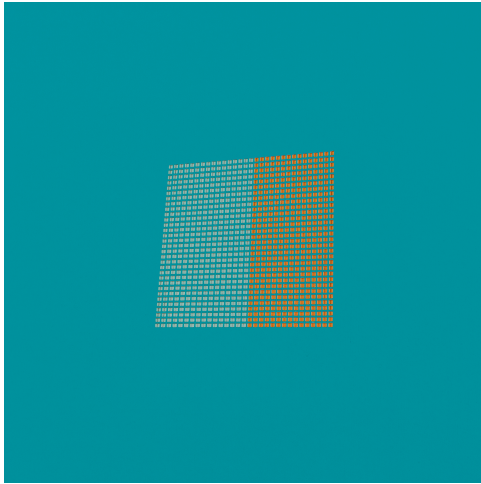


THE PIPER GALLERY



Tess Jaray – *Mapping the Unseeable* (10th October – 9th November)

The Piper Gallery is proud to present *Mapping the Unseeable*, an exhibition of recent paintings by Tess Jaray. Throughout her career, Jaray has maintained a fascination with geometry, pattern, colour and repetition culminating in her distinctive, subtle yet penetrating works.

Although Jaray's sources of inspiration have varied over time, she has always been driven to understand the connections between the patterns of the world and the patterns of her own mind and how these reflect each other. Her artwork evokes a carefully wrought tension between opposites: serenity and intensity, silence and sound, stasis and motion and two and three dimensions.

Jaray's early works scrutinised the power of architecture on emotions. She drew upon patterns in objects, textiles and architecture that were influenced by Gothic, Baroque and Islamic churches, suggesting the spiritual, meditative realms of entire cultures. Her works frequently resembled flattened representations of real three-dimensional spaces, recalling architectural outlines or plans. In the late 1990s, works began to emerge with small shapes of colour vibrantly placed on a monochrome background. She was no longer referencing historical sources and, instead, searched more intensely for 'the hidden movements that underlie our world.' Jaray turned towards her personal landscape and found a new vocabulary for her own experiences.

Whereas Jaray's early works made use of a delicate muted palette, since the mid-1990s her work now uses dynamic, even wild colour combinations (sometimes limited to two or three colours) to magnify her artistic flavours. Over time, Jaray has set herself new challenges, trying, among other things, to see how impactful her work can be on a far smaller scale. It was Malevich who taught her that 'much can be said with the most simple means' and this is highly apparent in her assertive and striking, minimal and seductive meditations on this pioneering Modernist.

Mapping the Unseeable will include over twenty identically-sized works from Jaray's recent series, *After Malevich*; inspired by Malevich's *Red Square*, they have an energy and intensity of colour that lights up a room. Jaray comments, 'I saw this painting in the Russian Museum in St Petersburg a few years ago. I was riveted. It dominated a room full of quite different paintings - Repin, turn of the century Russians, some landscapes of endless trees and mud. But *Red Square* ... seemed to fill the entire space, even though it was quite small.'

In recent years, in order to achieve a finer level of precision, Jaray has begun using a computer to draw, creating the background and foreground as separate components. The background panel is painted in her chosen colour (or colours) and the foreground sheet of paper is screen-printed with a single colour, before being laser-cut. Many of these works give the impression of a cross-section of a landscape with undulating tones so minor that they can only be seen first-hand. They also hint at a subtle three-dimensional quality that appeals to Jaray.

There is an inherent ambiguity in Jaray's work that leaves viewers questioning what exactly they are looking at; the patterns hint at shapes or possibilities but never reveal their intentions. They demand that the viewer takes an active role in trying to make sense of Jaray's codes, ensuring that her works resonate within us.