

BERGGRUEN

GALLERY

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CHRISTOPHER BROWN Square Dancing

February 23 – March 25, 2023

Berggruen Gallery is pleased to present *Christopher Brown: Square Dancing*, an exhibition of new paintings by American artist Christopher Brown. This show marks Brown's eighth solo exhibition at the gallery and will be on view February 23 – March 25, 2023. A reception for the artist will be held at the gallery on Thursday, February 23 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

The title of Brown's exhibition *Square Dancing* is a pun, an ironic description of the artist's playful manipulation of grids and squares that undergird a range of images from cityscapes and gingham shirts to swimming pools and pajamas. As with imagery, style in these new works varies from striped or patterned abstraction in some paintings to representative figuration and written text in others. Throughout, however, threads of light humor and expressive iconoclasm define these new paintings as dealing much more with expression and pictorial invention than straightforward depiction.

More so than in previous bodies of work, the new paintings often deal with pattern relationships, most emphatically, perhaps, in paintings of gingham shirts and one large painting of undulating, luminous green and white stripes that, at first glance, could read as a take-off on 1970's era abstraction. But a subtle break in the pattern and a row of small horizontal buttons just below the mid-line shifts interpretation, 'revealing' the work as what appears to be an enormous close-up of satin pajamas. Or so it seems, both with this work and others, where patterns of rich and luminous color appear simultaneously as abstract fields and, often, ironically playful images.

Brown's paintings have often lived in that rich zone between abstraction and figuration and in that way these new and quite different paintings seem also familiar. Their strong color sensibility, personal inventiveness, and sense of place—their specificity and invention—even in the small studies of shirt collars, define and enliven them. Yes, they are pictures, but at their heart they are paintings—embodiments of painterly inquiry, arrived at rather than planned, slightly mysterious, personal interpretations of the artist's world.

Christopher Brown was born in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina in 1951. He received his B.F.A from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1973 and his M.F.A from the University of California, Davis in 1976. He has held teaching positions at the University of California, Berkeley, and the California College of the Arts. His work is represented in numerous museum collections including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth; and the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City. Brown has been honored with several awards since the beginning of his career, including three National Endowment for the Arts awards. He currently lives and works in Berkeley, California.

Christopher Brown: Square Dancing February 23 – March 25, 2023. On view at 10 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA 94105. Images and preview are available upon request. For all inquiries, please contact the gallery by phone (415) 781-4629 or by email info@berggruen.com.

Gallery Hours: Monday – Friday, 10:00am – 5:00pm

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