

# WASSERMANPROJECTS

**Wasserman Projects to Feature New and Recent Works  
By Artists Ken Aptekar, Abigail Murray, and Peter Zimmermann  
In Upcoming Exhibition, *Color-aid***

**Exhibition to Explore Distinct Approaches to Use of Color, Texture, and Pattern**

**On View July 13 – August 30, 2018**

**Detroit—July 13, 2018**—Today, Wasserman Projects in Detroit will open *Color-aid*, an exhibition of new and recent works by New York- and Paris-based painter Ken Aptekar, Cologne-based artist Peter Zimmermann, and Detroit-based sculptor and ceramicist Abigail Murray. Curated by Wasserman Projects' Director Alison Wong, the exhibition explores the artists' distinct formal and conceptual approaches to the use of color, surface, and pattern. *Color-aid* will include paintings and photographs by Aptekar, resin-poured canvases by Zimmermann, and a site-specific installation of Murray's ceramics; together, these vividly-colored and highly-textured works will engage viewers in a sensory experience and highlight our emotional and psychic responses to such visual stimuli. The exhibition will remain on view through August 30, 2018.

The layering of meaning within the featured works is also an important connective thread throughout the exhibition, with each artist's formal studies and experimentations providing an avenue through which to both reveal and mask social commentaries. While Zimmermann's distortion of sourced imagery into pure abstraction offer an insight into the way our society consumes visual culture, Aptekar's paintings, which juxtapose fragments of historical paintings with contemporary phrases and words, suggest an alternative perspective on who gets to interpret and define art. Murray's practice, which straddles fine art and commercial production, highlights the attachment we feel to the functional goods with which fill our homes. These contrasts in the surface experience of the works and their deeper underpinnings are further amplified within Wasserman Projects' expansive, industrial-style space, located in the historic Eastern Market and which once served as a firehouse.

“My vision for the exhibition is to create an incredible and unexpected burst of color when visitors enter the space. It immediately enlivens and draws you in a way that encourages closer looking, which then exposes these complex layers of hues, patterns, and textures that are motivated by aesthetic inquiries and also more deeply embedded ideas related to art and culture. It is very much about how far an individual visitor wants to go with it,” said Wong. “At the same time, this show is very core to the vision for our program, in that it presents a voice local to Detroit, in Abigail, alongside those who have developed in other parts of the U.S. and abroad. The interplay of themes and the relationships between the local and global dialogues are crucial to embracing a wider view of art and artists.”

*Color-aid* marks Wasserman Projects' ongoing engagement with Aptekar and Zimmermann, who have previously shown and been supported by the gallery and exhibition space. The incorporation of Murray also continues Wasserman Projects' commitment to providing a platform for the local artist community. Further information about each artist follows below:

### **Ken Aptekar**

Ken Aptekar's practice is driven by the idea that only through viewer engagement and interaction can a painting gain meaning and narrative. To this end, Aptekar combines portions of historical works of art that he has painted with his own texts and phrases to create a new visual lexicon that engages with contemporary experience. The source material is often radically altered to emphasize particular aspects and details, and the texts are inscribed on glass that is, then, bolted atop the painted panel, producing a floating effect. In this way, Aptekar democratizes the experience of art, giving primacy to the viewers' interpretations. Sometimes humorous and always dissonant, the final work is powerful in its confluence of history and contemporaneity.

The works in the series, "DON'T STOP", a selection of which will be featured in *Color-aid*, were developed from Aptekar's desire to reconcile his experiences of being born in Detroit and living for extended periods in both New York and Paris. For Aptekar, life in France is marked by class, highly developed codes of behavior, easy sensuality, significant state art patronage, refined taste, and a strong federal government. In contrast, Americans regard federal support of culture as an unnecessary luxury, class difference with skepticism if not denial, privilege as nothing more than a lucky break, and opportunity as unhindered by familial and personal history, race, or gender. "DON'T STOP" is a series of 15 large-scale paintings that mesh these ideals and contradictions into a single visual experience, accentuated through the insertion of lyrics from Motown songs, as well as the application and manipulation of color, scale, and surface texture.

### **Abigail Murray**

Abigail Murray's work is motivated by the emotional intimacy that people gain with the objects with which they live every day. She takes simple and utilitarian forms and transforms them through the layering of patterns and textures, often finding new and dynamic combinations. Her work engages with the repetition of mass production, while emphasizing the subtle imperfections that arise from handmade processes. Drawing on her work as a sculptor, Murray fuses the openness of free-form creation with the functionality inherent to many design objects, producing works that live comfortably in both realms.

For *Color-aid*, Murray will present a site-specific installation that combines a range of free-standing pedestals and other frameworks with a selection of her handmade ceramics, creating a kind of three-dimensional still-life, inspired by historic paintings of the genre. The installation will encourage movement through the exhibition space and provide a 360-degree viewing experience of her work. Inspired also by her collaborations with a local florist, the installation will feature florals and other organic materials—sourced from Eastern Market and other local producers—creating further juxtapositions in color, form, and physicality.

### **Peter Zimmermann**

Peter Zimmermann operates in the liminal space between artistic tradition and technological advance. Inspired by the ongoing rise of the Internet as a primary means through which to experience visual culture, Zimmermann uses the distortive effects of digital tools as the basis for his paintings and installations. His multi-tiered process begins with the sourcing of existing imagery, which he then alters to the point of pure abstraction. These fluid forms, planes, and lines become the basis for his work, which he transposes onto panels and builds up through the application of epoxy resins—sometimes covering the panel with up to 20 layers. The resultant works appear as moving color fields suspended in a kind of high-gloss ice.

For *Color-aid*, Zimmermann will present a selection of wall panels, that range widely in color, from bright yellows to cool blues to nearly-translucent whites with subtle notes of color hidden beneath the surface. Together, they provide an intricate study of light, color, density, and depth, as they trick the viewers' eye

and entice a physical engagement with the work. With the original image completely lost, Zimmermann's paintings become formal experimentations that allow for the meaning to be determined by the viewer.

### **ABOUT WASSERMAN PROJECTS**

Wasserman Projects was conceived by Michigan-native Gary Wasserman, and opened its doors in a former firehouse in Detroit's historic Eastern Market, one of the oldest and largest year-round markets in the U.S., in fall 2015. Wasserman Projects is guided by a spirit of collaboration, recognizing that artist projects are best realized and most meaningful when they engage a broad range of cultural organizers, community leaders, and the dynamic and diverse populations of Detroit. The organization works with artists from across disciplines and around the world, presenting exhibitions and performances that will spark a discourse on art, but also cultural, social, or political issues, which are particularly active and timely in Detroit. Wasserman Projects is nimble in its approach, operating in part as a for-profit gallery as well as a presentation space, and helps artists bring to fruition new projects that may not otherwise be possible.

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