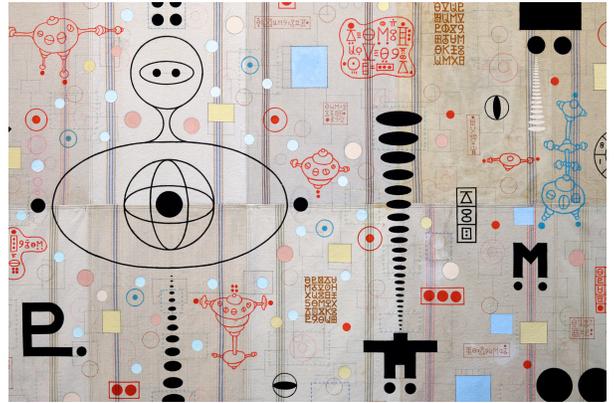


The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

For Immediate Release

KARLA KNIGHT: NAVIGATOR **October 17, 2021 to May 8, 2022**

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum is pleased to present *Navigator*, the first solo museum exhibition of Karla Knight (b. 1958). Knight has spent the last forty years creating an impressive body of work that spans painting, drawing, and photography. After regularly exhibiting in New York City in the 1980s, Knight moved to New Mexico in 1994. She returned to the East coast in 2000, settling in Redding, CT in 2003 where she has lived and worked for nearly twenty years. This exhibition is a focused survey charting the development of a far-seeing language over a four-decade career. *Navigator* will be on view at The Aldrich October 17, 2021 to May 8, 2022.



Karla Knight
Tapestry (detail), 2020
Courtesy of the artist

Knight’s imagery is steeped in science, the occult, early twentieth century abstraction, Surrealism, and Native American art. And yet, her visual language is purposefully impenetrable—she offers no clues or methods to its decoding. For her, its true meaning must remain unnamed, as it is ultimately inspired by “the mysteries and absurdities of life.” As she asserts, “It’s not about deciphering the work or the language. It’s about living with the unknown.”

Her dense paintings and works on paper swirl with graphic shapes, diagrams, and ciphers that appear both archaic and space aged. The exhibition at The Aldrich tracks the vast range and evolution of Knight’s pictographic lexicon—the spaceships, floating orbs, and eyeballs, as well as the hieroglyphic-like lists, charts, codes, alphabets, and other invented symbols—that embody these all-over compositions. Similar, to the trail-blazing abstract artist Hilma af Klint (1862–1944) and the far-sighted symbolist Agnes Pelton (1881–1961), Knight’s enigmatic image databank channels a passionate engagement with spiritual and nonphysical realms.

The exhibition will also debut a new body of work, what the artist refers to as “tapestries.” Using reclaimed cotton cut from c. 1940s–50s seed and grain bags purchase on eBay, Knight sews pieces together to form patchwork compositions. Unstretched, she draws and paints directly on the surface with flashe, colored pencil, and graphite, while hand-embroidering select sections. The grounds exhibit signs of staining and mending, visual markers left from their previous life-use.

Karla Knight (b. 1958, New York, NY) lives and works in Redding, CT. Her work has been exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions and is represented in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Brooklyn Museum, the Walker Art Center, and the Emily Fisher Landau Collection, among others. She has been the recipient of various awards and fellowships including MacDowell, New Hampshire; Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, NY; and two Connecticut Artist fellowships.

The artist’s first museum publication, with an essay by Amy Smith-Stewart, the exhibition’s curator, will accompany the show.

Organized by Amy Smith-Stewart, Senior Curator, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum.

For press inquiries, please contact Emily Devoe at 203.438.4519, extension 140, or edevoe@thealdrich.org

Generous support for *Karla Knight: Navigator* is provided by The O’Grady Foundation, Diana Bowes and James Torrey, Cynthia Smith, and Ann and Mathew Wolf. The catalogue for *Karla Knight: Navigator* is generously supported by the Eric Diefenbach and James Keith Brown Publications Fund and the Lenore G. Tawney Foundation.

Media support is provided by *Connecticut Cottages & Gardens (CTC&G)*. **CTC&G**
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