

VAN DOREN  
WAXTER

MOIRA DRYER  
*Paintings & Works on Paper*

April 4 – May 24, 2019  
23 E 73<sup>rd</sup> St  
Opening reception: Thursday, April 4, 6:30–8pm

Exhibition talk by curator Lily Siegel  
Saturday, April 6 at 11 AM  
Free and open to the public



*Pop*, 1989, 2 parts: acrylic and wood, and steel, Acrylic/wood:48 x 61 inches (121.9 x 154.9 cm), Steel plate: 13 x 31 inches (33 x 78.7 cm)

Van Doren Waxter is pleased to present a solo exhibition of works from the 1980s and early 1990s by the late painter Moira Dryer (b. 1957 – d. 1992), on view from April 4 to May 24, 2019 at 23 East 73<sup>rd</sup> Street. Featuring a dozen works, the exhibition will include paintings on wood panel, rarely exhibited works on paper, and printed ephemera from the artist's lifetime exhibitions. This marks the gallery's third presentation of Dryer's work, following two exhibitions organized by gallery partner Augusto Arbizo in 2014 and 2016. The show anticipates a forthcoming Moira Dryer solo survey entitled *Moira Dryer: Back in Business*, organized by Lily Siegel and Klaus Ottman, which opens at The Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. in January 2020.

Dryer's work is synonymous with the idea of soulful abstraction, during a period of New York art when expressive figuration and appropriation—the Pictures Generation—were the most followed and supported movements. Dryer eschewed representation and irony, and instead developed and pursued a practice which manifested itself as very deliberate and rigorous abstractions – in terms of craft and optical generosity – imbued with authenticity and personal wit. Her paintings are highly considered objects, often customized in format and presentation, sometimes including sculptural elements that project into the viewer's space. She often proposed contradictory ideas in a single work, exposing a rich internal dialogue about the modernist conventions that her work both references and defies: flatness and illusion, silence and movement, and picture and object. Paintings such as *Pop* (1989) and *Untitled* (1991) are visually charged, graphic

abstractions whose illusory effects belie their immediacy and painterly touch. In these emblematic works, along with others in the exhibition, seemingly straightforward objects emit a distinctive and penetrating aura of mystery.

David Rhodes, writing in *The Brooklyn Rail*, asserts that Dryer was an “innovator” and that “her work succeeds in accentuating the decorative whilst remaining sculptural, ambiguous, and pleasurable.” Art Critic Jerry Saltz, remarking in *New York Magazine* on the artist’s use of pulsating, iridescent color, enthuses, “all this gives Dryer’s work visual juice — something that makes it feel flaunting, present, and not false.”

**About the artist:**

Dryer was born in Toronto in 1957 to an architect mother and philosophy professor father and moved to New York in the 1970s to attend the School of Visual Arts undergraduate program, where she studied with, and befriended the painter Elizabeth Murray; she graduated with honors in 1980. During her early years in New York, Dryer was a studio assistant for Julian Schnabel as well as Murray; worked as a prop and set designer for the avant garde theater company Mabou Mines; and married the artist Victor Alzamora (1953 – 1983). Her first solo exhibition was at John Good Gallery, NY and she subsequently went on to have solo gallery shows with Mario Diacono, Boston; Fred Hoffman, LA; Mary Boone Gallery, NY; and posthumously with Jay Gorney Modern Art, NY. During her lifetime, she had solo museum exhibitions at Boston’s Institute for Contemporary Art in 1987 and at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1989. In 1993, a year after Dryer succumbed to a five-year battle with breast cancer at age 34, The Museum of Modern Art opened a solo Project exhibition of the artist’s work, organized by Rob Storr. Moira Dryer’s work is in the permanent collections of the Guggenheim Museum, NY; Whitney Museum of American Art, NY; Museum of Modern Art, NY; The Art Institute of Chicago, IL; and the Carnegie Museum of Art, PA, among others.

**Gallery Information**

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