

## Emily Kiacz

### *Braided Horizon*



February 22 – March 30, 2024

Morgan Lehman is pleased to announce the opening of “Braided Horizon,” an exhibition of new paintings and works on paper by Emily Kiacz. This marks the artist’s second solo exhibition with the gallery.

Emily Kiacz’s chief painting concerns are color and shape. Using a unique multifaceted process based in formal repetition, duplication, mirroring, and synthesis, she interrogates the relationship between the painting support’s exterior shape and its interior pictorial world.

Kiacz begins each new body of work by making numerous works on paper in the form of watercolor landscapes or prints. This year, she introduced a new process called “pochoir” to her practice. Pochoir is a stencil-based printing technique, which was widely used from the late 19th Century through the 1930’s by artists including Sonia Delaunay and Matisse. Kiacz employs pochoir to overlay gouache atop watercolor, creating abstract imagery through the slow accumulation of many tonal layers. This approach relies on transparency in the ground and opaque forms in the foreground. Dithered edges produce a sense of deep space. Though not studies in the customary sense, Kiacz’s works on paper inform her larger painting practice.

The artist arrives at color choices for each piece by overlaying several hues until a fuzzy atmosphere is achieved, color converting into light. Kiacz then brings her abstract ideas into the physical realm: acrylic paint on canvas stretched over shaped panel. Using large brushes to generate broad, sweeping strokes, Kiacz pushes color around the surface of each painting to obscure the underlying form. Wet-into-wet paint blending and overlapping tones create colors that defy naming. Vibrant gradients splice pictorial space and emphasize the different compositional elements at work in each image. Through formal repetition, subtleties arise in surprising ways.

Kiacz’s work is informed by the natural world. The artist is particularly drawn to fleeting, atmospheric light phenomena such as sunsets and rainbows, which she actively documents for reference on her phone when such encounters happen. In fact, Kiacz’s interest in working on shaped supports arose from an earlier landscape painting practice; many of her panel forms refer directly to the shapes of clovers and flowers. In the artist’s vision, these natural allusions are mutated into something bolder and more emblematic. In spending time with the works in this exhibition, we are permitted entry into Kiacz’s singular world, basking in its glow.

**Emily Kiacz** is a painter who lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She received her MFA in painting from Boston University in 2011 and her BFA in painting from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2009. Kiacz has been awarded fellowships at Yaddo (Saratoga Springs, NY); Tilleard Projects Residency (New York, NY); The Edward F. Albee Foundation (New York, NY); and Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop (New York, NY); among others. Over the last ten years, she has exhibited her work at Cuevas Tilleard Projects (New York, NY); Morgan Lehman Gallery (New York, NY); and White Columns (New York, NY). Her work is included in the collections of New York Presbyterian Hospital, Fidelity Investments, Morgan Stanley, and Smith College Museum of Art.