

ANDREA FESTA

what color is silence

Carla Accardi | Jean-Baptiste Bernadet | Ernesto Burgos | Günther Förg
Riccardo Guarneri | Dylan Solomon Kraus | Jane Swavely

Andrea Festa is pleased to present *what color is silence*, a group exhibition bringing together works by Carla Accardi, Jean-Baptiste Bernadet, Ernesto Burgos, Günther Förg, Riccardo Guarneri, Dylan Solomon Kraus, and Jane Swavely with a critical text by Elisa Carollo.

The exhibition will be on view from 9 July to 12 September 2026, with an opening reception on Thursday, 9 July, from 6 to 9 pm at Lungotevere degli Altoviti 1, Rome.

Conceived as a meditation on color as a silent force, the exhibition traces a dialogue between historical and contemporary positions in abstraction. Rather than approaching color as a purely formal element, *what color is silence* considers it as atmosphere, structure, memory, pressure, and vibration. Across the works presented in the exhibition ask how painting can speak without declaring, how silence can become spatial, and how color can carry emotion, history, and thought before language takes shape.

At the historical core of the exhibition are Carla Accardi, Günther Förg, and Riccardo Guarneri, three artists who expanded the language of post-war abstraction through radically different approaches to surface and perception. Her work *Senza titolo* (1967) opens thy exhibition. Carla Accardi – central figure of Italian abstraction and co-founder of Forma 1 in 1947, developed a visual language based on sign, rhythm and chromatic experimentation. Accardi's works have been praised during several editions of the Venice Biennale, as well as held in major public collections, including the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Rome; Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin; and Museo del Novecento, Milan.

Günther Förg introduces a darker and more architectural tension with his 1986 work on paper. One of the most significant German artists of the late twentieth century, Förg developed a practice that moved between painting, photography, architecture and sculpture, constantly returning to the unresolved legacy of modernism. His work has been exhibited internationally at institutions including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Kunsthalle Bern; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt; and Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, and is held in collections including MoMA, Tate, SFMOMA and the Hamburger Bahnhof.

Riccardo Guarneri's practice approaches color as a nearly immaterial phenomenon. Rooted in the perceptual investigations of Italian post-war abstraction, his works allow the image to emerge through delicate chromatic shifts, subtle geometries and barely perceptible signs. Guarneri was invited to the 33rd Venice Biennale in 1966, and later participated in *Weiss auf Weiss* at Kunsthalle Bern. In 2017, he was included in Christine Macel's *Viva Arte Viva* at the 57th Venice Biennale. His work has recently received renewed institutional attention, with four works entering the collection of the Centre Pompidou, Paris, in 2021.

These historical positions are placed in dialogue with contemporary practices that extend abstraction into psychological, symbolic, and material territories. Jean-Baptiste Bernadet's painting operates as an atmospheric field. His works resist immediate legibility, unfolding slowly through tonal shifts, light, and painterly rhythm. Bernadet has developed an internationally

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recognized practice around the instability of perception and the emotional charge of color. He has held solo exhibitions at Almine Rech in Brussels, Paris, Shanghai, and Monaco; Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen; Marfa Book Company, Texas; Valentin, Paris; and Karma, New York. His work is held in collections including Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Museum Voorlinden, Wassenaar; MAC VAL, France; CNAP / FNAC, France; Long Museum, Shanghai; and the JPMorgan Chase Collection.

Jane Swavely's luminous surfaces suggest thresholds, screens or portals, built through layering, erasure, and chromatic intensity. Her paintings balance romanticism and minimalism, presence and absence, with color often appearing as something remembered, dissolved or half-revealed. Based in New York, Swavely emerged in the 1980s and worked as an assistant to Lois Lane and later to Brice Marden, developing an intuitive and deeply atmospheric form of abstraction. Her recent solo exhibitions include Magenta Plains, New York; kaufmann repetto, Milan; Night Gallery, Los Angeles; and the Mandeville Gallery at Union College. Her work is included in the Allentown Art Museum, the JPMorgan Chase Art Collection and Union College.

Ernesto Burgos pushes painterly energy into sculptural form. Working with fiberglass, resin, wood, cardboard, charcoal and oil paint, he folds, cuts, bends and layers materials into wall-based objects that appear caught between construction and collapse. His practice extends the physical language of post-war abstraction into three dimensions, placing gesture, surface and objecthood in a state of tension. Born in Santa Clara, California, and based in New York, Burgos has been included in institutional exhibitions at El Museo del Barrio, New York; the Museum of the City of New York; the University of Maryland; Kunstmuseum Magdeburg; and Palazzo Rospigliosi, Zagarolo. His work is held in the collection of Kunstmuseum Magdeburg, Germany.

Dylan Solomon Krauss's paintings combine layered oil surfaces with recurring motifs such as moons, birds, glyph-like signs and archetypal landscapes, creating images that feel at once archaic and futuristic. Drawing on early modernist spirituality, fables, the occult and ancient systems of representation, Kraus constructs a private universe in which painting becomes a space of prophecy and dream. He received his BFA from Cooper Union, New York, and has held solo exhibitions at Almine Rech, New York and London; Peres Projects, Berlin, Seoul and Milan; Mammoth, London; and Entrance, New York.

What connects these works is that color becomes more than surface: it becomes a carrier of time, sensation, and opacity. The exhibition asks how color can speak before language, how silence can become active, and how painting can still produce forms of attention that resist speed, noise, and disappearance.

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festa@andreafestafineart.com