

# GRAY

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **JUDY LEDGERWOOD JOINS GRAY**



GRAY is pleased to welcome Judy Ledgerwood to the gallery's roster of artists. In a painting career spanning four decades, Ledgerwood has confronted and expanded the history of abstract painting by decentering perceptions of its neutrality and prioritizing visual engagement and pleasure. GRAY will represent Ledgerwood in New York and globally alongside Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, and 1301PE, Los Angeles. Ledgerwood's first solo exhibition will open at GRAY New York in Fall 2025.

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Judy Ledgerwood's bold, large-scale canvases engage viewers in active looking and challenge conventional notions of beauty and taste in painting. She has employed color and shape with great deliberation and specificity, embracing traditionally feminine colors like pastels and pinks to undermine the male-dominated milieu of abstract painting. With repetitive circular shapes and her signature quatrefoil pattern, Ledgerwood bends and relaxes the traditional grid, bringing influences from the Pattern & Decoration movement, quilting, and textiles into her paintings. As critic John Yau writes: "Like Mary Heilmann, whose bright geometric abstractions loosened the rigidity and joylessness of Minimalism, Ledgerwood has a current of impropriety, painterliness, waywardness, and humor in her work, upending the symmetry and repetition that are common to decorative and ornamental arts. Ledgerwood's ribald interruptions and optical shifts are part of what holds the viewer's attention."<sup>[1]</sup>

Ledgerwood's work includes an exploration of architectural spaces through her creation of monumental wall paintings and environmental installations, which have been exhibited at The Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and the Smart Museum of Art, among others. Unlike Sol LeWitt's wall drawings, which focus on the conception of the idea and are executed by others based on instructions, Ledgerwood herself paints directly on the wall, creating immersive environments that respond directly to the architecture and light of the spaces they occupy. Most recently, Ledgerwood has extended her thesis to include work in ceramics and site-specific stained-glass installations. She is based between Chicago, Illinois, and Sawyer, Michigan, and is professor emeritus in the Art Theory and Practice program at Northwestern University.

"We are thrilled to welcome Judy Ledgerwood into the gallery program, where her unique vision and rigorous practice will enrich and deepen the stories we tell about the relevance and, indeed, the urgency of abstract painting today," says GRAY gallery principal Valerie Carberry.

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## ABOUT JUDY LEDGERWOOD

Judy Ledgerwood (b. 1959, Brazil, Indiana) received a BFA from the Art Academy of Cincinnati and an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Ledgerwood has held solo exhibitions at numerous venues, including the Graham Foundation, the Smart Museum of Art, The Art Institute of Chicago, and The Renaissance Society in Chicago, Illinois; Häusler Contemporary in Zurich, Switzerland, Munich, Germany and Lustenau, Austria; and Rhona Hoffman Gallery in Chicago. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin; the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; the David Owsley Museum of Art, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana; the University of Kentucky Art Museum, Lexington, Kentucky; and Museum of Arts and Design, New York, NY. She has received awards from the Driehaus Foundation, Artadia, The Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, and Illinois Arts Council.

Photo: Chris Strong

¶ Yau, John. "Judy Ledgerwood's Playfully Subversive Patterns." *Hyperallergic*, 9 Feb. 2023, [hyperallergic.com/799622/judy-ledgerwoods-playfully-subversive-patterns/](https://hyperallergic.com/799622/judy-ledgerwoods-playfully-subversive-patterns/).