

## BORTOLAMI

**Rebecca Morris**

**21 February – 28 March 2020**

**Opening Friday, 21 February from 6 - 8 pm**

Bortolami is pleased to announce Rebecca Morris' first exhibition with the gallery, a diverse group of new paintings made within the past year. Based in Los Angeles, Morris has spent the past two decades of her distinguished career expanding her own personal and idiosyncratic vernacular of abstraction.

Morris' paintings often include organic shapes separated by jagged borders, a constellation of pigments which recall maps or aerial landscapes. Oils are thinned to the point of watercolor and judiciously applied from above. Morris positions her large canvases face up on the floor so that the thin paints do not drip right off the surface. As most paintings are significantly larger than her own body, she glides just above them on custom-built scaffolding, a literal bridge on wheels which allows her a greater opportunity to direct the unruly, fluid color.

For other paintings, Morris takes canvas floor tarps which had been laid on her floor, accumulating errant paint drips and shoe prints, and stretches them into wholly new compositions. These matte grounds are often contrasted with thin lines or wide swaths of thick oils which are masked off and spray-painted silver or gold. The outcome looks like soldered metal, a feature that Morris likens to tig welding or, in an art context, the signature on an Alexander Calder mobile.

The artist's distinct and constantly evolving motifs include step patterns, checkerboards, stylized grids and overlapping hook shapes the artist refers to as "lobster claws," a nod to her upbringing in Connecticut and appreciation for maritime iconography. These different typologies of paintings are sometimes combined to make hybrid works. These are not "sister paintings" so much as cousins in a long lineage of studio experimentation which yield dynamic, surprising results. Morris works similarly with color, sometimes attempting the "ultimate" painting in an unexpected palette of red, mauve or charcoal, disguising various other pigments in plain sight to better punctuate her opulent, power clashing patterns.

**Rebecca Morris (b.1969)** has been the subject of significant solo exhibitions at the Blaffer Art Museum, Houston (2019) and Bonnefanten Museum, Maastricht, Holland (2014) as well as presentations at Made in L.A., Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2016), the Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2014) and The Renaissance Society (2005). Her next museum exhibition will be a solo show at the Institute of Contemporary Art Los Angeles. Other solo shows include those at 356 Mission Rd., Los Angeles and LA<ART, Los Angeles. Her work is in various public collections which include The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Sammlung Goetz, Munich, Germany; Bonnefanten Museum, Maastricht, Netherlands; DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, IL.