

JUDIT REIGL

Entrance–Exit (1986-89)



October 30<sup>th</sup> – December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013

SHEPHERD **W** & **K** GALLERIES

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Exhibition organized by  
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## JUDIT REIGL

### ENTRANCE-EXIT (1986-89)

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Shepherd W & K Galleries are proud to present an exhibition of works by Judit Reigl centered on an extraordinary series from the late 1980s, the *Entrance–Exit* paintings. The series, which is distinguished by the image of an open portal, is emblematic of the life and career of a fiercely independent artist who is now recognized as one of the most original painters of the late 20th century. This event coincides with our associates W & K Fine Arts' Viennese introductory exhibition of Judit Reigl (*Entrée–Sortie*, October 8th through November 16th).

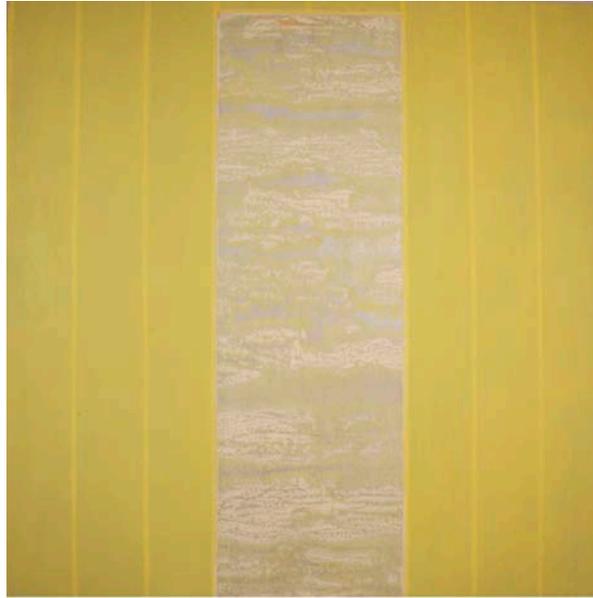
By a quirk of fate, the artist is deeply connected to Austria. Judit Reigl was born in 1923 in Kapuvár on Hungary's Austrian border. In 1946, on her way to Italy to study at the Hungarian Academy in Rome, Reigl spent four months in Vienna waiting for her Italian visa. Although she lacked a ration card, the opportunity to see the paintings of Bruegel, Correggio, and Rubens and to attend concerts made up for the deprivation she endured. A new world opened to her. After two years in Italy, Reigl returned home. She left Hungary for good in 1950, escaping across the newly fortified border that was part of the Iron Curtain. Reigl eventually reached Paris, her destination, but it was in the death-defying passage to Austria that she found absolute freedom (in her own words: "between two states but belonging to none").

As the artist stated: *At first, the border appeared to me in 1950 as a hermetically sealed door: padlocked. I had to force it open at any cost, or die there trying. Who knows if the fact that I managed to break through is the reason why the often recurring "doorways" in my painting are invariably openings; they are never barred.*

Reigl has shown consistently in museums and galleries throughout Europe since 1954, the year André Breton declared her 1950 painting *They Have an Unquenchable Thirst for the Infinite* to be a masterpiece and presented her first solo exhibition in Paris. In 1957, "Toiles nouvelles," a group exhibition at the Galerie Fournier (Kléber), Paris, placed Reigl in the company of Jean Degottex, Sam Francis, Shirley Jaffe, Simon Hantaï, Hans Hartung, Marcelle Loubchansky, Georges Mathieu, Henri Michaux, Jean-Paul Riopelle, Mark Tobey, and Wols. She was included in the Guggenheim International Award and the Carnegie International, and showed with James Bishop, Jasper Johns, Brice Marden, Joan Mitchell, and Agnes Martin, at the Fournier, Rencontres, and Yvon Lambert galleries. While not favored by collectors and critics – except for the most discerning, such as Maurice Goreli and Marcelin Pleynet – she was highly regarded by her fellow artists (Arnulf Rainer among them).

Reigl's recent retrospective at the Nantes Museum of Fine Arts was followed by a concise survey at the galleries of the permanent collection of the Centre Pompidou, Paris. Besides the important selection at the Centre Pompidou, her paintings are in the collections of the Tate Modern, London; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; and the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo. In New York, her works have been acquired by the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Judit Reigl has just turned ninety. During her first forty years, she had led an eventful life, looking for a space to breathe-freely. She found it exactly fifty years ago, in a barn near Paris she turned into a studio by breaking down walls, and she has been mining that space ever since.



ENTRANCE-EXIT, 1986  
oil on canvas, 76x74 in

1

**ENTRANCE-EXIT, 1986-89**

Mixed media on canvas, 76" x 74" (190 x 185 cm)



2

**ENTRANCE-EXIT, 1987**

Mixed media on canvas, 78" x 78" (195 x 195 cm)



3

**ENTRANCE-EXIT, 1986**

Mixed media on canvas, 89" x 78" (223 x 195 cm)



ENTRANCE-EXIT, 1988  
OF AN CANVAS, 78x78 IN

4

**ENTRANCE-EXIT, 1988**

Mixed media on canvas, 78" x78" (195 x 195 cm)



5

## **FACING**

Mixed media on canvas, 117" x 77" (292 x 192 cm)