Kim FISHER

Kim Fisher's paintings are the result of her search for absolute beauty by overlaying the vocabulary of glamour and fashion upon the highly structured framework of minimal abstraction. She works within the history of formal abstraction (most notably color field painting), and enlivens it with symbols of desire, thereby offering a path to a new kind of abstract painting.

Fisher's work is influenced by artists Ad Reinhardt and Robert Ryman as much as designers Pierre Cardin and André Courrèges. She applies carefully hued layers of paint to stretched brown linen, often leaving areas of the canvas untouched to serve as a contrast to the lushness of the oil paint. Onto this surface, she incorporates elements from the world of luxury and fashion. Early on, her work consisted of the logos of famous design houses floating on monochromatic grounds: the "AC" of space-age designer Courrèges on rich red, Tiffany & Co. on Tiffany's trademark light blue, Chanel on white. Despite their origins in haute couture, "they're not really supposed to be ironic," Fisher states, stressing that she appropriates these icons for their formal appeal.[1]

More recently, her paintings have been influenced by the refraction of light within precious stones, and even take their titles, such as *Beryl 11*, 2001, and *Carbon 17 (Bort Diamond)*, 2004, from the names of gemstones. Rigid planes of subtle color gradations characterize these works, in which she uses simplified monochromatic palettes, reminiscent of Josef Albers. The color schemes are always painstakingly selected, ranging from sky blue and aqua to ultramarine in one work as well as marigold and pumpkin to cherry red in another. Fisher also allows ruffles of excess linen to stick out from the sides of these paintings, extending the color fields onto them, thereby challenging the strict modernist emphasis on purity and flatness. **M.S.**

1 As quoted in "Vintage Chic," *The New York Times Magazine*, pt. 2, October 13, 2002, pp. 96–102

left:
***Study for Gemstone*, 2004**
oil on linen, 21" × 17"

right:
***Labradorite, 31*, 2004**
oil on linen, 80" × 70"

opposite:
***Beryl*, 2001**
oil on linen, 29" × 29"