

## The Poetry of My Perception... Paintings Which Speak To Me

Paul Kolker presents *The Poetry of My Perception... Paintings Which Speak to Me* from March 22 through May 11, 2018 at the PAUL KOLKER collection at 511 West 25th Street in Chelsea. The exhibition is framed around four poems, written by Paul Kolker, which serve as the subtext and narrative for the paintings which 'speak' to the artist.



*Paul Kolker: the poetry of my perception, 2018 (installation view)*

As in his other sixty-two solo shows which he has both produced and curated, Kolker uses his art as an experiment to test the viewer's perception. For this exhibition, Kolker has written four poems about his perception of his experiences and feelings in the making of the paintings and their exhibition. He uses poetry for its emotional impact in explaining his process and his selection of subject matter; and also to narrate how he was influenced by others to develop his art practice and its operative theory. Kolker suggests that the audience first view the paintings; next read the narrative poems and finally view once again the paintings in order to provide an answer to his thesis question: Does having first read the artist's poem about a painting affect how the audience visually perceives the painting?

An inchoate concept in Kolker's curating this exhibition is John Ruskin's 'pathetic fallacy' coined by him in his treatise about culture, *Modern Painters*, circa 1850. Beyond metaphor and simile, Ruskin's pathetic fallacy hones in on the overreaching personification of all objects by falsely attributing feelings to those objects as in the poems of the Nineteenth Century British poets, such as William Wordsworth's 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud.'

Kolker in his four prior First Amendment exhibitions ([www.paulkolker.com/search/speech](http://www.paulkolker.com/search/speech)) has referenced Arthur Schopenhauer's 'Stand before a painting as one stands before a Prince... Speak not... unless [it] speaks to you.' The implication is that a painting communicates with its audience, as if it were to speak to the audience because there is a pathos of emotion and evoked

vibes within each member of the audience that is awakened by the painting. Like Buber's I-It dialogue, this expressionistic pathos of a pathetic fallacy of a painting which speaks to the artist about feelings 'embossed as dots upon the canvas of [his] brain,' may similarly affect the viewer perceptually by also speaking to her.

Paul Kolker (b. 1935) is a New York based artist with doctorate degrees in medicine and law. He is Fellow American College of Surgeons, Fellow American College of Legal Medicine and Emeritus Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Northwell Glen Cove Hospital, having practiced cardiothoracic surgery on Long Island from 1969 to 2013. In October 2001 Kolker moved his Long Island studio to his current address in the Chelsea art district so that he could produce his works and curate his exhibitions as an experiment in perception. His studio and gallery have together become his laboratory in which the viewer is the measuring instrument for Kolker's art as a perceptual experiment. *The Poetry of My Perception... Paintings Which Speak To Me* is Kolker's sixty-third solo exhibition.

In Paul Kolker: *The Poetry of My Perception... Paintings Which Speak To Me*, sixteen works are on view from March 22 through May 11, 2018 at the Paul Kolker collection, 511 West 25th Street in Chelsea, adjacent to the HighLine between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues.

Paul Kolker: *Origins... Helen's Dots* is on view at the Paul Kolker collection, 511 West 25th Street in Chelsea, adjacent to the HighLine between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues through March 16, 2018.

Paul Kolker: *Abstract Decalcomania... An Experiment in Perception* is ongoing at 600 Third Avenue.

For further information please call 212.367.7300 or email [info@paulkolker.com](mailto:info@paulkolker.com) or visit [www.paulkolker.com](http://www.paulkolker.com)