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# **ANNETTE CORDS**

**Language of Play**

January 26–April 1, 2023

**Opening Reception: Thursday, January 26, 2023, 4–7pm**

The Yeh Art Gallery is pleased to present *Language of Play*, a solo exhibition by artist Annette Cords, Adjunct Professor of Art and Design at St. John's University. The show includes Cords' large-scale Jacquard tapestries, smaller hand-woven pieces, works on paper, and digital prints. Through these works comprised of diverse media, the artist explores the interrelationship of visual-textual languages and the play between formal variation and the construction of meaning.

In her Jacquard tapestries, Annette Cords focuses on the multiple dimensions of weaving as she makes connections between text and textile, image and code, surface and structure. Jacquard weaving enables hybrid forms of expression in which language is visible and legible, image and code merge, and a tactile presence is created through digital structures. In this way, Cords presents these weavings as a conjunctive site filled with possibility to develop new modes of thinking.

The tapestries begin with drawings, photographs, and word pairings; elements are added, subtracted, and combined in Photoshop and Illustrator. Cords then brings image files into digital weaving programs where each pixel becomes a stitch, an interlacing of warp and weft. In her most recent tapestries, the artist takes one weaving file, doubles back, and repeats parts of it. The effect is filmic and glitchy, revealing a search for articulation and form through the playful making of the tapestry itself.

Many of Cords' forms and visual elements emerge from her everyday surroundings. In the show, a large, digitally altered image of a Manhattan playground adheres to a wall, and smaller weavings of abstracted letterforms hang on top. The basic shapes of the playground architecture provide the foundation for many possible actions, and the squared forms of the letters facilitate varied combinations. The artist connects play and language by focusing on their primary structures and the imaginative actions and associations they enable. In her gouache drawings, Cords reconfigures an alphabetic monogram, a combination of circles, triangles, and rectangles that contains all letters. Working within a limited formal vocabulary, arranging a given set of elements becomes a game.

The installation at the Yeh Art Gallery encourages multiple perspectives and interpretations: the tapestries hang from frames so that the front and the back can be viewed; words, glyphs, and visual elements repeat in tapestries and inkjet prints; and the placement of weavings on printed backgrounds layers visual forms and typographic elements. Weaving becomes a rich and nuanced language that intersects and augments developments in language, painting, and abstraction. The unexpected juxtapositions and layering invite viewers to look closely and decipher new meanings.

### **Artist's Bio**

Annette Cords was born in Northern Germany and raised in Hamburg. She received her MFA in Painting from the University of Pennsylvania. Since then, her practice has evolved to span installation, sculpture, and textiles. Recent solo and two-person exhibitions include Kunsthalle Dessau (Dessau, Germany), PS122 Gallery (NYC), InLiquid Gallery (Philadelphia), Project:ARTspace (NYC), Kang Contemporary (Berlin), New York Public Library (NYC), and Villa Rosenthal (Jena, Germany). Her work has appeared in group shows

at venues including the Queens Museum, Flux Factory, The Drawing Center, Kentler International Drawing Space, and Montreal Centre for Contemporary Textiles. She has been the recipient of grants and residencies, including a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, an Open Sessions Residency at The Drawing Center, and a grant from the ArsVersa Kunst-Stiftung.

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