

Crowley, Evelyn. "Artist Profile: Hot on the Scene L.A. Gallerist Maggie Kayne on Contemporary Art." The Hollywood Reporter. 23 September 2013. Web.

## ***THE*** ***Hollywood*** ***REPORTER***

### Artist Profile: Hot on the Scene L.A. Gallerist Maggie Kayne on Contemporary Art



**The art dealer of Kayne Griffin Corcoran opens an exhibit featuring the work of French abstractionist Francois Morellet and will debut an exhibit by David Lynch in November.**

Maggie Kayne greets a visitor at her L.A. gallery, Kayne Griffin Corcoran, with a conspiratorial gleam in her eye. "I want to show you the conference room," she says, beckoning down a side corridor to a nondescript white door. Inside is a room, awash in an arctic blue glow, that induces a soothing effect both potent and instantaneous-like snorting a Xanax. "It's a James Turrell Sky Space," explains Kayne, pointing up to one of the artist's signature ceiling apertures -- a rectangular dome illuminated by a framework of LED lights that are programmed to shift color gradually. As she settles into a chair, the walls blush a pale pink. "I'm always mellow and this brings people down to my level," says Kayne.

A little bit hippie (she mentions her zodiac sign, Gemini, and owns an infrared sauna), a little bit rock n'roll (she zips around town on a Ducati in a **Rick Owens** men's leather jacket) Kayne gives off serious cool girl vibes. Yet the 29 year old insists that wasn't always the case. "[In high school] my mom used to make my sister, Jenni, take me out and include me," she laughs. Jenni, of course, is **Jenni Kayne**, the West Coast fashion mainstay whose eponymous collection of breezy sportswear is a favorite among L.A.'s young social set. Although close, the siblings differ noticeably -- evidenced by their wardrobes. "Jenni is more of a lady. ... I'm a chic bum," says Maggie, who today is sporting battered Alden desert boots with **Proenza Schouler** black jeans and a denim vest.

Moreover, unlike Jenni, who launched her line in 2003, Maggie's career success is freshly minted. The gallerist first caught the art world's attention in 2011 when she orchestrated a gallery partnership with notable industry veterans **Bill Griffin** and **James Corcoran**. The dynamic plays to their individual strong suits with Kayne spearheading programming and scouting fresh talent while her two cohorts broker behind-the-scenes deals. "I'm not really a born sales person," says Kayne. "So they kind of make up for that."

In May, the trio moved from their Santa Monica location into a stunning, new 15,000 square foot space befitting a blue chip gallery. Turrell, whom Kayne befriended through Griffin and Corcoran, was brought on board to design the Sky Space along with the building's lighting

scheme and various outdoor elements like the trellises and landscaping. “I wanted something that felt warm and casual and very L.A.,” says Kayne, gesturing to the bougainvillea-festooned courtyard that can double as an al fresco exhibition space.

Kayne’s management style is similarly laid back. Rather than amass a permanent stable (she bristles at the mention of “representation”), she prefers to maintain close relationships with established talent like Turrell, **David Lynch** (who has a show of artworks opening there Nov. 23), and **Deanna Thompson** while arranging one-off exhibits with artists she discovers along her travels. In July, she tapped Berlin-based conceptual artist, **Daniel Knorr**, for a solo show that found an unlikely muse in Los Angeles’ urban sprawl with resin sculptures taken from casts of street potholes. This week, an exhibit featuring the work of French abstractionist **Francois Morellet** opens. Entitled *No End Neon* (through Nov. 15), the show includes paintings and adhesive wall installations along with the Morellet’s famous large-scale neon works. “The more I learned about him the more excited I became to bring his work to Los Angeles where he hasn’t had any previous exposure,” says Kayne who commissioned a major site-specific piece comprised of 29 argon neon tubes for the exhibit.

Despite her obvious enjoyment of the job, Kayne says gallery ownership was never the plan. Not that she really had one. After graduating high school in 2002, she drifted in and out of college -- from Berkley to NYU to USC -- unmotivated, unsure of what she wanted to do. It wasn’t until a friend began picking up artworks like Basquiat drawings and Warhol polaroids --that the light bulb went off. “I realized that I could participate in contemporary art,” explains Kayne. “[It] was not just the A.P. class that I had to memorize paintings in.” With the support of her father, wealthy financier, **Richard Kayne**, she began collecting herself -- a Ken Price here, a Craig Kauffman there -- while taking on internships at LACMA and local gallery, Overduin and Kite. “I needed exposure and work experience in order to figure out my path,” says Kayne. “And I wasn’t going to get it in school.”

Today, Kayne’s lack of a formal art history education -- or rather the iconoclastic streak which prompted her to reject one -- is proving an asset. “The L.A. art world has for a long time itself been missing,” says Turrell. “But that has changed and that change is represented by people like Maggie coming into it. It’s sort of reinvigorated what’s always been possible in L.A., but at a much higher level.”

Kayne puts it more bluntly: “James Turrell says that taste and convention are kinds of restrictions and that L.A. is a revenge of the tasteless. So there really is no limit to what I can do here. I’m not really bound by any sort of definition of a gallery.”

