

# ALEXANDRE GALLERY

## **Martha Diamond in 2016** by Alex Katz

Martha Diamond attended Carleton College and went to the Sorbonne in Paris to study French. When she returned, her friends from college, Donna Dennis and Peter Schjeldahl, had become part of the New York poetry scene. Martha's aesthetic friends were John Godfrey and Jim Brodey. The three were socially fugitive and not interested in connecting to the mainline world, as Ginsberg and Bob Dylan were.

The first work I saw of Martha's was a black reproduction in a magazine. Amazing energy with no styling. In the early '70s she started painting teepees, tents and houses on flat grounds. She then proceeded to enlarge buildings and paint them with thick paint. They were part of the "bad painting" movement and were fashionable. The paintings were gestural with very little scale but a lot of surface energy.

Starting about 2000 the paintings became smaller with more scale and concrete forms. Outer directed artists include Jeff Koons, Bacon and Warhol. She's inner directed. The work relates to Forrest Bess, Charles Burchfield and Arthur Dove. The paintings are blunt. They will eat up almost anything you put near them. It's painting that makes sense now.

*Alex Katz is a painter based in New York City.*