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Wanda Koop at Night Gallery
October 14 - November 18, 2017

By Jody Zellen



In her first exhibition in Los Angeles, Winnipeg-based artist Wanda Koop investigates the idea of dislocation. This dislocation is reflected in the exhibition title, *In Absentia*, and results from the fact that Koop's paintings of New York City were actually created in Canada.

During a residency in New York, Koop became enamored with the physical structure of the city, specifically the shapes of the skyscrapers and the spaces between them. She also absorbed the way the city changed over time and returned to Canada with notes and drawings of the light and color shifts that occurred throughout the day and into the night. Created *in absentia*, these paintings reflect Koop's memories of New York. They also continue her explorations of color theory—in this series, Koop transforms atmospheric nuances into powerful artworks depicting the City's skyline as geometric abstractions.

Koop's paintings are both large and small. Whatever their size, each work is structured as a two or three color impression of the urban landscape with skyscrapers rendered as silhouettes. The small works feel like photographic detail whereas the larger paintings allow for more expansive views.

In Absentia (Deep Blue – White), 2016, portrays ghostly white buildings surrounded by dark blue negative space, perhaps a reference to the night sky. Paintings including *In Absentia (Skyblue – Luminous Green)* and *In Absentia (Orange Yellow Ivory – Blue)*, both 2017, are jarring because of the intensity of the color relationships. Set against a deep blue-gray ground, the vertical rectangles in *(Orange Yellow Ivory – Blue)* are gradients that transition from ivory at the bottom to a glowing bright orange at the top, evoking the impression of a city on fire. While some works are painted in bright contrasting colors, others are more subtle, evoking the city on cloud filled day.

Koop's distillations capture the geometry of the city in sublime, minimalist form, her constructions of positive and negative spaces conveying her memories of the intricacies and color schemes reflected in the ever changing New York skyline.

Wanda Koop, "In Absentia," October 14 – November 18, 2017 at Night Gallery, 2276 East 16th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90021, www.nightgallery.ca.

<http://artillerymag.com/night-gallery-wanda-koop/>