

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

The  INDEPENDENT

Harmony Korine: From ‘Spring Breakers’ to psychedelia *The American film director has turned his hand to painting psychedelic artworks*

Charlotte Cripps



*Round trip: Harmony Korine, Scapp Willter Circle, (2015) © Harmony Korine. Courtesy the artist and Gagosian Gallery.
Photo: Robert McKeever*

The American film director Harmony Korine, 43, is holding his first art exhibition in London, next month. Better known as the director of *Spring Breakers* (2012) and for *Kids*, which was his debut film as a screenwriter in 1995, he has more recently been painting large-scale circle paintings, with a hypno-psychedelic effect.

Putting movies on the backburner, he has retreated to his massive five-storey studio in Nashville, Tennessee, where he finds “enjoyment” in painting.

“I haven’t missed making movies,” he says. “I’ve been making movies since I was a kid. I haven’t been pining for it. In fact making artworks, it’s been a great relief.”

Korine has “long been interested in loops, mistakes, trance-y repetition” and he describes his artworks as “writing a novel with pages missing in all the right places”.

His exhibition Fazors at the Gagosian Gallery will include mostly circle paintings, as well as some figurative paintings of “lurking ghosts” and “devilish characters”.

“The patterns and colours in the circle paintings are trance-like and hypnotic,” he explains. “There is no real beginning and no end. The paintings by definition are never ending.”

Korine is planning on making a new film later this year. “It will be the best one yet. It is ambitious. Only now am I able to make it.” But for him, all of his creative work, whether films, books, or artworks, have “some strange unification”.

“I’ve always been attracted to things that are more difficult to define, in both my movies and paintings,” he says. “A hallucinatory state... something washes through you... things that are less tangible. There is a strange magic I’ve always been searching for.”

Korine has always painted in private – he had a few shows in the US in the Nineties, before he focused on his movies. But over the past couple of years, “I’ve got more into the paintings”.

In his new work, Korine is inspired by sun motifs from the Sixties and Seventies. The series “conjures the Colour Field paintings of Helen Frankenthaler” as well as the “colour spectrums of Robert Delaunay’s Rhythm painting series” – or even a Bridget Riley optical trance.

“I find painting freeing,” he says. “Because it is less collaborative than making movies.”

Harmony Korine’s Fazors, Gagosian Gallery, London W1 (www.gagosian.com), 8 February to 24 March