

Gallery Sofie Van de Velde

An Optimist's View
Kees Goudzwaard
29.03.2025 – 04.05.2025

Kees Goudzwaard (b. 1958 in Utrecht, NL) currently resides in Antwerp (BE) and works in Reusel (NL).

At first glance, Goudzwaard's artworks appear to be minimalist color studies composed of rectangular pieces of paper and tape. However, upon closer examination, these works reveal themselves as meticulously crafted trompe-l'oeil paintings. He begins by constructing a model, arranging sheets of paper, transparent acetates, and tape on a colored surface. He often spends a considerable amount of time refining the composition before creating the painted illusion at full scale.

Goudzwaard seamlessly merges artistic traditions spanning three centuries, combining the playful precision of 17th-century Dutch still-life painting with the abstract art movements of pre- and post-war Europe and America (Ben Luke, 2009).

Solo exhibitions of Kees Goudzwaard's work have been held at Collectie de Groen in Arnhem (2023), Club Solo in Breda (2020), Villa Croce, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea in Genoa (2017), De Kabinetten van De Vleeshal in Middelburg (2014), the Stedelijk Museum in Schiedam (2011), the Museum of Modern Art in Arnhem (2010), Culturgest in Lisbon (2006), and S.M.A.K. in Ghent (2005), among others.

His work has also been featured in numerous group exhibitions at esteemed institutions such as the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Museum Kunsthpalast in Düsseldorf, the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo, École Nationale des Beaux-Arts in Paris, M HKA in Antwerp, Fondazione Giuliani in Rome, Palazzo Fortuny in Venice, the Roger Raveel Museum in Machelen-Zulte, Programa Art Center in Mexico City, and Museum Het Valkhof in Nijmegen.

Goudzwaard's art is part of the permanent collections of institutions including S.M.A.K. in Ghent (BE), the Santa Barbara Museum of Art (USA), Museum Kunsthpalast in Düsseldorf (GER), Mu.ZEE in Ostend (BE), the Rubell Family Collection in Miami (USA), FRAC Des Pays De La Loire in Carquefou (FR), and Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Helga de Alvear in Cáceres (ESP), among others.

Excerpt from Jan De Vree's essay on the work of Kees Goudzwaard, on the occasion of the artist's upcoming publication:

"Goudzwaard articulates his visual language through a process of layered construction, in which colored paper fragments, transparent foils, and adhesive tape are rearranged into a full-scale model. His practice operates within a constant framework, where fixed principles define the boundaries within which experimentation takes place. The successive layering on a rectangular plane—a balance between chance and intention—gradually condenses the concept into a visual entity. This process unfolds through a methodical approach, where an initial constellation of materials emerges from an intuitive dynamic of selection, positioning, and reordering. This rhythmic reshuffling culminates in a balanced composition, which is then translated precisely and unaltered into another medium: oil or acrylic on canvas.

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Model and painting form an inseparable unity. The ephemeral constellation of paper and adhesive tape is preserved through its painterly translation, where the reproduction attains the status of an original once the provisional model is dismantled and disappears. This tension between the temporary and the permanent, between construction and fixation, is a central aspect of Goudzwaard's practice. His paintings navigate between two extremes: they function both as chromatic, planar structures and as hyper-precise simulations of a tangible, spatial reality.

The paper models operate as *simulacra* of painterly abstraction, while the paintings themselves function as optical constructions—balancing between hyperrealism and formal reduction. The texture of materials is reinterpreted in paint, transforming the sheets into transparent color fields, framed within grid structures defined, reinforced, or interrupted by painted tape fragments. Despite their material illusion, these works position themselves within a broader discourse on abstraction and non-figuration."

Kees Goudzwaard is represented by Gallery Sofie Van de Velde and NuNu Fine Art (New York City & Taipei).