VAN DER GRINTEN GALERIE



Robert Currie

Ambient Space

13.06.2020–22.08.2020

“Looking is, I feel, a vital aspect of existence. Perception constitutes our awareness of what it is to be human, indeed what it is to be alive” Bridget Riley. 2017

The Van der Grinten Galerie last presented Robert Currie works in 2013. So we are especially pleased to open this long-awaited solo exhibition of the London-based artist’s completely new works.

Robert Currie (*1976, GB) works across the mediums of sculpture, installation and drawing to produce work that explores the inevitable emergence of order from disorder. This creates a physical sensation and redirects our way of viewing. In his three-dimensional paintings Currie generates dynamic energy, rhythm, movement, light and space as he investigates different possibilities for physically engaging the viewer in the visual perception of a work.

In this new exhibition, Currie presents new iterations of his wall-based kinetic artworks, for the first time in colour. Contrary to the earlier works in monochrome black or very subdued colourations, here the human hand that applies the colour in a painterly action is much

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more strongly emphasized: still strictly systematically constructed of rows of thousands nylon strands within a big Perspex case, each strand is hand painted with absolute precision in various colours. The resulting motif, however, can only be seen from one particular standpoint, which the viewer must first find by moving back and forth in the space in front of the work. The artwork, in other words, prompts the viewer to engage in a sort of choreography. With their strictly formal, linear construction, the sculptural canvasses strongly reference architecture – a field that has always been an important source of inspiration for Currie – but they also play with counteracting effects of the ephemeral and the deceptive. The images oscillate between the abstract and the photographic, while a closer study of the individual painted strands opens the process of painting and time to the viewing eye: the work becomes an "exploded" canvas.

The new motifs draw on places and spaces that people have made their own, ambient spaces that were once useful and productive for a time, but were later abandoned. The neglect and dereliction of these subjects gives rise to a new sense of loneliness and tranquillity. Comparisons with Edward Hopper and Ed Ruscha are apparent. Blended with the influence of Currie's fascination for 1960's Op-art and its protagonists, such as Jesús Rafael Soto, Bridget Riley and Victor Vasarely, completely new visual and spatial possibilities arise, in which a combination of poetical mood and precision structure join in a unique union.

Robert Currie studied at the Manchester Metropolitan University and at the Royal College of Art in London. His works are represented in numerous collections in the UK and abroad (Lady De Rothschild, Beth Rudin DeWoody, Defauwes and Simmons & Simmons) and in public spaces in Frankfurt, London and Brussels.