

«It takes time to view a painting, and I want to make time part of the experience of my paintings.»

David Reed

PRESS RELEASE

David Reed

«I'm trying to get closer but I'm still a million miles from you»*

Opening: Thursday, November 15, 2018 | 6 – 8 pm

Exhibition: until January 12, 2019

Häusler Contemporary Zürich is pleased to present «I'm trying to get closer but I'm still a million miles from you», an exhibition of new work by renowned painter David Reed. This is the artist's second solo exhibition with the Zurich gallery.

Since the 1970s, David Reed (*1946, San Diego, US, lives in New York, US) has developed and built upon his particular painterly vocabulary and today remains a leading proponent of abstraction. Working in a labor-intensive, multi-layered process, Reed explores the continued relevance of painting in the contemporary digital landscape. The paintings combine influences from Abstract Expressionism, Minimalism, and Pop Art with his interests in Renaissance and Baroque painting and a passion for film.

The dozen new paintings created specifically for this occasion draw from three bodies of work.

In a series of long, narrow horizontal paintings, seemingly three-dimensional transparent gestural marks overlap in foil-like layers that suggest visual crescendos. The works' unsettling surfaces are reminiscent of film projections or digital monitors, with their intense color, and a light that seems to come from within. In addition to the resolute gestural marks made by pulling alkyd glazes across the primed canvases with large painting knives, Reed has begun introducing stenciled marks into the paintings since his exhibition at the Museum Haus Lange Krefeld in 2015. Using the stenciled marks, the same painterly gesture can now appear in various colors, sizes and layered sequences, or even as mirrored in reverse. Because they are repeatable and changeable, the stenciled marks take on new moods and references in relationship to each painting on which they are placed. In most cases, the stencil is the last mark made in a work and seems to hover in the foreground on its own invisible layer. One associates cinematographic moments, "glitches" or "fade-out/fade-in" effects. Some of these paintings have an understructure of regular, vertical segmentation, as does a filmstrip.

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Additionally, Reed presents four works that develop on his early work from the 1970s, in which tall thin canvases are transversed by repeated dark brush marks. In the new works, stenciled marks are superimposed over the serialized hand-made marks. This juxtaposition highlights the difference in the two methods of painting. While the stenciled marks are built up in thick, separate layers, the hand made marks merge, wet-on-wet, into one surface. The stenciled marks wrap around the edges of the canvas creating the illusion that they are projected images.

There are also three TV-size paintings in the exhibition. These smaller horizontal paintings have compacted dialogues of combined hand painted and stencil marks in intensely colorful and emotional juxtapositions.

In these paintings Reed condenses vocabularies that have grown over the years into complex, abstract narratives. They tell of the history and present of painting, but also how our emotional lives have changed because of the shifts of human perception in the age of digital media – «still a million miles from you».

Deborah Keller, Häusler Contemporary

* from: Bob Dylan, «Million Miles»

Biographical information

David Reed's work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions worldwide since the mid-1970s. Recently there have been major presentations of his work at the Pérez Art Museum, Miami (2016), at the Rose Art Museum, Waltham, US (2016), at the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2015, with Mary Heilmann), at the Museum Haus Lange Krefeld (2015) and at Kunstmuseum Bonn (2012). In addition, his paintings have been included in significant exhibitions on contemporary painting such as «Painting 2.0: Malerei im Informationszeitalter», which was held at the Museum Brandhorst in Munich and at the Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig in Vienna in 2016.

His paintings are included in important collections such as The Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Guggenheim Museum, New York, The Metropolitan Museum New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, the Kunstmuseum St.Gallen, and the Museum Moderne Kunst Frankfurt.

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