

»Materials and mechanical procedures have enormous expressive (or subjective) potential.«

Gary Kuehn

MEDIA INFORMATION

Gary Kuehn »Black Paintings«

Exhibition: February 19 – April 1, 2016

New Opening Hours: Wednesday, 2 – 8 pm
Thursday and Friday, 2 – 6 pm
and by appointment

Häusler Contemporary Munich is pleased to present an exhibition of Gary Kuehn's »Black Paintings« that were last seen in a solo presentation in Europe almost 10 years ago. A major figure of post minimalism and process art, Kuehn started the »Black Paintings« in 1969. As with his sculptures, these works are at once strongly physical and metaphorical.

In 2014, Gary Kuehn's (*1939, New Jersey) retrospective at Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein featured a wide range of his sculptures and drawings and visualized his remarkable contributions to art after 1960. Groundbreaking exhibitions of that time such as »Eccentric Abstraction« (1966) or »When Attitudes Become Form« (1969) in which Kuehn took part already suggested his importance.

We are pleased to present a selection of early and recent »Black Paintings« – a major series of Kuehn's that was last shown extensively in Europe in 2008. The series began in 1969 and continues to this day. These powerful works reveal a sculptural approach to painting in which the canvas is treated as a »container to be filled in a procedural way« (Kuehn). Just as in Kuehn's sculptures, a focal accent lies on the physical nature of materials. The artist points out that these works are »made rather than painted,« and that they originate from the chosen material's inherent qualities: Acrylic paint is poured into predetermined irregular circular shapes giving the works a relief-like structure due to the thickness of the paint. The circular stencils themselves are distorted and squeezed against each other in their attempt to accommodate the outer limitations of the canvas.

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Typical for Kuehn's oeuvre, these works combine a strong physical presence with a metaphoric dimension. The squeezed circles are entrapped by the predetermined format of the painting, which forces each element to adjust one to the next, controlled overall by the authority of the format of the painting. With his »Black Paintings«, Kuehn found trenchant expression for one of his recurring subjects: the relation between control and the quest for freedom.

Our exhibition will be accompanied by a publication designed by Peter Zimmerman that will document the evolution of the »Black Painting« series from 1969 to the present.

Deborah Keller, Häusler Contemporary

Early on in his career, Gary Kuehn's work was shown at Paul Bianchini Gallery and at Fischbach Gallery in New York as well as at Galerie Ricke in Cologne. Furthermore, he was part of seminal exhibitions such as »Eccentric Abstraction«, New York 1966, »When Attitudes Become Form«, Bern 1969, and »documenta 6«, Kassel 1977.

His works are part renowned museum collections all over the world, including the Museum of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Albertia, Vienna, Kunstmuseum Bonn, the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, and the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin.

If you have questions, Deborah Keller will be happy to answer them for you: +41 43 810 04 26, dk@haeusler-contemporary.com