

«I continued to be interested in finding ways for paint to arrive on the surface – landing without my touching it.»

Michael Venezia

MEDIA INFORMATION

Exhibition: Michael Venezia «Versions»

Opening: February 10, 2016, 6 – 8 pm

Duration: until April 30, 2016

Tuesday–Friday 12 am – 6 pm, Saturday 11 am – 4 pm

Häusler Contemporary Zürich is pleased to announce its second solo exhibition of Michael Venezia. With several works that have not been seen for a long time, the show again reveals his fundamental contribution to the renovation of painting after 1960. At the same time, an exhibition at Kunstverein Heilbronn also honors Venezia's impact, as well as a new extensive publication published by Snoeck that was realized in cooperation with Häusler Contemporary.

Our second solo show of Michael Venezia (*1935, New York, US) draws a line from his cutting-edge pictorial inventions from around 1970 to recent works, that stand out in contemporary art's variety by their concision and freshness. From his early years, we show «Stripe Paintings» that examine the independency of picture carrier and paint application. A main focus of our exhibition is on the impressive historical «Spray Paintings» some of which are on view for the first time in decades. At the end of the 1960s, the color spray gun allowed Venezia to abandon the brush stroke highly celebrated by Abstract Expressionism, thus generating his paintings from an interplay between artistic decisions and coincidences. Finally, we present recent «Bar Paintings» with which the artist pushes the boundaries between painting and object.

Our exhibition thus recollects Venezia's essential role as a «co-author» of painting's renovation history after 1960. The artist developed his very specific approach in the sequel of Abstract Expressionism and surrounded by Minimal and Conceptual Art whose representatives like Dan Flavin, Robert Ryman or Sol LeWitt were friends of Venezia's. His art presented itself as kind of a synthesis and progression of the mentioned tendencies in the classic medium of painting. Amidst a climate that favored sculpture and installation, Michael Venezia confessed himself passionately to painting. Ever since he relentlessly challenged the possibilities and limits of this genre.

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Coinciding with our show, an extensive exhibition at Kunstverein Heilbronn also honors Michael Venezia. Both presentations are accompanied by a new monograph that provides a first general overview of the artist's oeuvre and outlines his art historical importance in an interview by art historian Tiffany Bell. The book was realized in cooperation of the galleries Greta Meert and Häusler Contemporary and will be published in February 2016 by the art book press Snoeck.

Deborah Keller, Häusler Contemporary

If you have questions, don't hesitate to contact Deborah Keller
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Michael Venezia lives in Brooklyn, US and Trevi, IT. Early in his career he participated in group exhibition of major museums such as The Museum of Modern Art, New York (1971) or the Whitney Museum of Art, New York (1977). He often was presented alongside important artists of the 1960s, for example Dan Flavin, Fred Sandback, Donald Judd or Bruce Nauman. His most important solo exhibitions to date were shown at Kunstmuseum Winterthur (1996), at Westfälischen Kunstverein Münster (1997) and at the Josef Albers Museum Bottrop (2009). Works by Michael Venezia are part of various renowned collections, among others Museum of Modern Art, New York, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Collection Mondstudio, Cologne, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung Munich, Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Kunsthaus Zürich and Kunstmuseum Basel.