



Merson, 2019. Acrylic and resin on canvas. 240 x 180 cm | 94 1/2 x 283 7/16 in. © Courtesy of the artist & Perrotin

Bernard Frize

Journey in Autumn

Opening Wednesday September 11, 6pm - 8pm

September 11 - October 26, 2019

Perrotin New York is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new paintings by seminal French painter Bernard Frize, coinciding with the 25th year anniversary of our first collaboration with the artist. Opening on September 11, the exhibition follows solo exhibitions at Perrotin Tokyo and Perrotin Paris, as well as a major presentation of the artist's work at the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

«The layers of content that a Frize painting generates arise as one becomes aware of how the painting is made, what it is made out of, how it acts on our biological perceptual apparatus, how our reception of the work is responsive to the light and scale of the circumstance we find the painting in, and the various points of reference outside of it that a viewer is able to coalesce in mind. And then this edifice built in mind rattles together with the ongoing sensual experience of standing in front of the painting.

This awkwardness, inherent to the relationship between paintings and language, is only part of the story. In addition, the paintings all on their own, before language is brought to bear, embody layers of contradiction proposing that many things are true at once. They are invested, so to speak, in gray. They are not partisan. In this way, my experience of Frize's language is consistent with my experience of the paintings themselves.

Each painting presents a coherent, often object-like, very factual index of eventfulness. Some of the paintings are like knots, some like a scientific graph turned into a simultaneously thick and thin object floating on top of the prepared canvas. The clear factual gestures that accumulate on each painting embody layers of conflicting information and tensions between binaries: control/happenstance, predictability/unpredictability, emotion/asceticism; jewel/diagram, evidence of the author/absence of the author. As these contradictions seem to hover, just a few millimetres out from the ground of the painting, embodied in painted brushstrokes, coincident with one another, another subject seems to emerge: hierarchy is denied. Though that proposal too is contradicted in that the painting itself is bracketed by its elevated status as fine art, and that status can't but accumulate to the painting.

He, like a scientist, engages in experiments – experiments that yield unpredictable findings. We viewers receive an experience of the indexical product. We the audience and Frize the author shares the painting as a point in our relative trajectories – the author's end point and our beginning point.

In the end Frize presents us with simple physical / visual koans. These works rarely depart from a symmetrical engagement with the canvas, usually have limited engagement in compositional play, and present as complex simple unities. In these ways, their form resonates with the long history of religious painting. The subject matter emerges as layers of human impulses in contradiction, separate but together, like toddlers engaging in parallel play, inside of what is generally a symmetrical whole held a little aloft from the surface of the canvas, like a halo hovering around the head of an angel. When all is said and done the paintings are “believable”, perhaps optimistic, and certainly fraught.»

The above excerpt is from Jessica Stockholder's essay “*Facts of the matter: Reflecting on the work of Bernard Frize*,” featured in BERNARD FRIZE. WITHOUT REMORSE, a catalogue published this year on the occasion of Frize's retrospective at the National Museum of Modern Art, Centre Pompidou.

Artist Biography:

In 2015, Bernard Frize was awarded the Käthe Kollwitz Prize by the Berlin Akademie der Künste. The Jury members, Ay e Erkmen, Mona Hatoum and Karin Sander wrote in their statement: “He strives with the utmost sophistication toward the advancement of contemporary painterly abstraction and the development of a topology of painterly gestures and structures. ”Bernard Frize was also awarded the Fred Thieler Prize for Painting, Berlinische Galerie, Berlin, 2011. The artist has been the subject of solo exhibitions in worldwide institutions, including the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisboa, Portugal; Berlinische Galerie, Berlin, Germany; Museum Morsbroich, Leverkusen, Germany; Kunsthallen Brandts Klædefabrik, Odense, Denmark; Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, UK; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France; S.M.A.C.K., Ghent, Belgium; Gemeentemuseum, the Hague, the Netherlands; Kunstmuseum Basel & Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Switzerland; Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Münster, Germany; Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland; Museum Moderner Kunst, Stiftung Ludwig, Wien, Austria; De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg, The Netherlands; Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney, Australia; Kunsthalle, Zürich, Switzerland; the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, USA, Villa Medici, Rome, Italy. He has also been featured in important group exhibitions, including the Sao Paulo Biennial, Venice Biennale, and Sydney Biennial, amongst others. His work is represented in more than 45 public collections around the world, including the Tate Gallery, London; MNAM/ Centre Pompidou, Paris; MUMOK, Vienna; NMAO the National Museum of Art Osaka; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt; the Kunstmuseum, Basel and the Kunsthalle, Zurich.

More information about the artist >>>