

GALERIA HEINRICH EHRHARDT

Helmut Dorner

From November 6th to December 14th 2019

With an extensive selection of his most recent paintings, the Heinrich Ehrhardt Gallery presents Helmut Dorner's fifth solo exhibition in Madrid.

Some of the keys to his painting since its appearance in the panorama of new European abstraction in the 1980s, and still present in his new pieces, reside in the ideas of support media, layer, surface, matter, light and perception. While his painting was originally developed fundamentally on canvas and wood, these were later substituted by methacrylate boards. The material deposited on any of these supports accentuated the objectual character his work has acquired in each of its different periods.

Today, wood is once again the main support and his painting is articulated on the basis of certain pictorial actions that obey compositional and chromatic aspects. His paintings now contain different versions of themselves under the same surface. Versions hidden behind flattened and homogeneous paint, far from the materiality of some of his previous proposals, and in which forms, embracing one another, and superimposed contours, sometimes hidden and sometimes revealed, construct compositions of colour in an ambiguous challenge between the fixed and static image and the agitated and variable motif. Reduced in many cases to their maximum expression and alternating the harmonious rhythm of drip painting with the impact of the sudden colour surface, these paintings – their masses of colour – are arranged on different layers that function as temporal phases, revealing everything about the work and moving us towards a changing painting in which past and future linger as image.

In addition to an interpretation of painting as permanent crisis, for Dorner, the work is inseparable from personal existential experience and his reflections on this are at the work's genesis. Finding the precise balance in which the noise of process becomes silence and the blurred boundaries between the multiple possibilities of a painting become sharp and clear is the key to his incessant search. Indeed, the rounded and erotic forms, apparently flat, also find more complex development in that which is blurred and diffuse. The outwardly defined forms result, in large part, from freer pictorial spaces in which the imprecise and the blurred acquire a notable presence. Everything happens behind the last layer of paint and, there, the moulds, bodies and forms act as mental fragments and sections of the real. Dorner's new painting is one of formal concretion, of the accumulation of possibilities and visual alternatives, one on top of the other, with variable aspects and an almost geological development in which the irregular interior mass forms the visible layer of the surface. Far from arbitrariness, these marks cover the space with a profound logic and a metaphysical sense of aesthetics.