

# GALERIE MARIAN GOODMAN

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NIELE TORONI

*Un tout de différences*

Opening on 16 May, 2020

Galerie Marian Goodman is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by Niele Toroni. The exhibition will open on Saturday 16 May and, in keeping with the working method he defined in 1966, Toroni will display imprints of a No. 50 brush repeated at regular intervals of 30 cm. The gallery will present a dialogue between works of different dimensions and on various mediums, including canvas and foam board.

If the definition of Toroni's method sounds limited, in practice it has given him tremendous freedom as, with great economy of means (a flat brush 50 mm wide, a compass and a level for measuring distances, coloured paint) he has, over the last fifty years, applied thousands of monochrome imprints in a variety of colours over all kinds of surfaces, including the walls of the spaces where he has been invited to exhibit his work. In several institutions, including the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris and the Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin, Toroni's works have become permanent features.

"Toroni's painting is at home everywhere. Whatever the place, the surface, the space that is offered to them, the imprints fluently, surreptitiously, elegantly and unemphatically find their place, in door frames, windows, corners high and low, in staircases, on walls, on glass panes, on a canvas, on a newspaper, on a roll of paper, on a banner, a caravan and, why not, a wine barrel...They inhabit space as only music can do."<sup>1</sup>

When he first showed the imprints of a No. 50 brush repeated at regular intervals of 30 cm, as part of the ephemeral *Manifestation I* exhibition during the 18th Salon de la Jeune Peinture at the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris, in 1967, Toroni was presenting his subversive, radical vision of the act of painting. He was thereby affirming that painting was the result of work and refuted the idea of the artist as someone guided purely by subjectivity or inspiration. Since then, what he designates as "work/painting" ("travail /peinture") has called for the reiteration of one single, minimal gesture, which he makes a point of not delegating to anyone else.

"For me it has never been a matter of using pre-existing objects (forms, materials) and playing on their displacements (disorientation). An imprint of a No. 50 brush does not pre-exist, it is not visible if there is not a No. 50 brush loaded with paint that is applied to a surface so that it can leave its imprint there. The imprint of a No. 50 brush results from and bears witness to a pictorial action, it does not precede it. It is not a matter of moving, but of painting: trying to make painting, without qualms... and too bad for fashion!"<sup>2</sup>

Toroni's work/painting does not relate anything or deliver any messages. What matters is what is given to see. On the new collages on foam board, the imprints partly cover photographs of several of the artist's earlier exhibitions. This *mise-en-abyme* evokes Toroni's past but refers above all to the present, renewing our visual experience as "each imprint of a No. 50 is never the same". Bringing the visitor to this perception is Toroni's ambition, for him painting is above all an "apprentissage de la vision".

Niele Toroni was born in 1937 in Muralto, a village on the shore of Lake Maggiore in the canton of Ticino, Switzerland. In 1959 he decided to leave Switzerland and came to Paris to become a painter. He still lives and works in Paris today.

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Toroni has had solo exhibitions in many leading museums, including the Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Siegen (2017), the Swiss Institute, New York (2015), the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris (2015, 2001, 1989 and 1985), Villa Pisani Bonetti, Vicenza (2012), the Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Kleve (2002), the City Museum of Art in Japan, the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago (1990), CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux (1997), the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1994), the Musée National d'Art Moderne (MNAM), Paris (1991), the Musée des Beaux-arts de Lyon (1988), the Kunsthalle Bern (1978). He has also taken part in major international events such as Documenta 9 (1992) and 7 (1982), the Venice Biennale (1972 and 1976) and the Sao Paulo Biennial (1991).

Toroni's many prizes include the Rubenspreis, awarded in 2016 by the town of Siegen in Germany, and the Meret Oppenheim Prize (2012). His works are held in a numerous public collections: the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, the Centre Pompidou-Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich, the Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Kleve, the Musée d'Art Moderne de Strasbourg, the Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin, Germany, CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, and Kunstmuseum Luzern.

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<sup>1</sup> Marie-Laure Bernadac, "Toroni, mode d'emploi : trois ou cinq choses que je sais de lui," in *Niele Toroni*, exhibition catalogue, CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, 1997, page 27.

<sup>2</sup> Niele Toroni in "L'objet de mon intérêt à toujours été la peinture," in "Textes, notes et lettres (1962 -1997)," Niele Toroni, exhibition catalogue; CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, 1997, page 110

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