

WHITE CUBE

Imi Knoebel

Recent Works

18 November 2020 – 27 February 2021

White Cube Bermondsey

White Cube Bermondsey is pleased to present an exhibition of recent works, many with historical roots, by Imi Knoebel. An installation of multipart, monochrome paintings in $9 \times 9 \times 9$ pairs new works from the artist's ongoing 'Konstellation' series with a six-panel piece, all of which were first conceived in 1975. The adjacent South Gallery I groups a variety of new paintings, several of which trace their origins to 1968 and 1975. Together the presentations highlight the artist's playful, evolutionary approach to non-objective art.

In $9 \times 9 \times 9$, three works in vivid cadmium red, titled *Kadmiumrot 6, 9 and 10* (1975/2017 and 1975/2019), consisting of three, seven and five irregular rhomboidal panels, respectively, are inspired by both astronomical objects and Knoebel's own light projection experiments of 1968, in which fields of light became distorted into complex shapes as they fell on the insides and outsides of buildings. *o.T.* [Untitled] (1975/96), comprised of three equal-size, white rectangular bars, each formed from two closely abutted squares and stacked horizontally on the gallery wall, was first shown in an exhibition of canvases exploring alternatives to the medium's traditional rectangular format at the Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf in 1975 and was remade in acrylic on wood panels in 1996.

1975 was a pivotal year for Knoebel because it marks his first sketches envisioning the 'Konstellation' series and also the beginnings of his experiments with colour in conversation with his friend, painter Blinky Palermo, a fellow student of Joseph Beuys at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. As Knoebel considered expanding his predominantly black-and-white palette, he and Palermo, known as a master colourist, embarked on a quest for the 'perfect green'. After Palermo's untimely death in 1977, Knoebel fully embraced colour as a means to memorialise his compatriot. The juxtaposition of *Kadmiumrot 6, 9 and 10* with *o.T.* highlights the range of ways Knoebel's paintings engage architectural space and embrace or eschew colour. Standing proud of the gallery wall on thick-edged wood panels, the components of *Kadmiumrot* dance like kites in flight, while the flatter, uninflected white panels of *o.T.* appear at rest, in tranquil equilibrium.

In South Gallery I, Knoebel presents one of the mini-surveys he periodically organises to analyse his thought process. Here, he begins with *Hartfaserbild – 160 × 130* [Masonite Painting – 160×130] (1968/2017), a work in unpainted Masonite, an early, signature material dating to his experiments in Room 19, the classroom Beuys gave to

the young Knoebel and his then artistic partner Imi Giese. This industrially produced material has a warm brown hue that Knoebel prizes, and throughout his career he has used raw Masonite panels of varying sizes to make paintings. A horizontal 'Konstellation', *Kadmiumrot C C1-C5* (1975/2018), stands in contrast to its vertical counterparts in $9 \times 9 \times 9$. And three recent paintings in thickly brushed-on acrylic on shaped aluminium panels; the multi-coloured *Figura Psi* (2019) and *Figura He* (2020), and the light and dark brown *Figura Daleth* (2020), show the direction of Knoebel's latest work: experiments with free brushwork and freeform support shapes inspired, in part, by his young granddaughter's colouring books.

Throughout his career, Knoebel has continually pushed against the concepts and rhetoric that delimit reductive abstraction. From his student days, the artist has sought to expand on the early 20th-century innovations of Russian painter Kazimir Malevich, widely regarded as the earliest pioneer of pure abstraction. Malevich prized 'the supremacy of pure feeling or perception in the pictorial arts', and Knoebel too, pushes his work beyond conventional definitions, relying only on his own powers of perception and discernment. 'When I am asked about what I think when I look at a painting', he has said, 'I can only answer that I don't think at all; I look at it and can only take in the beauty, and I don't want to see it in relation to anything else. Only what I see, simply because it has its own validity.'

Imi Knoebel was born in Dessau, Germany in 1940 and lives and works in Düsseldorf. He has exhibited extensively including solo exhibitions at Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, Switzerland (2018); Museum Haus Lange und Haus Esters, Krefeld, Germany (2015); Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, K21, Düsseldorf, Germany (2015); Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany (2014); Museum der bildenden Künste, Leipzig, Germany (2011); Gemeentemuseum, The Hague (2010); Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin (2009); Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin (2009); Dia:Beacon, New York (2008); Hamburger Kunsthalle, Germany (2004); Kestner Gesellschaft, Hannover, Germany (2002); Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Valencia, Spain (1997); Kunstmuseum Luzern, Switzerland (1997); Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany (1996); and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1996).

BIOGRAPHY

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White Cube Bermondsey is open
Tuesday–Saturday, 10am – 4pm.
Admission is free.

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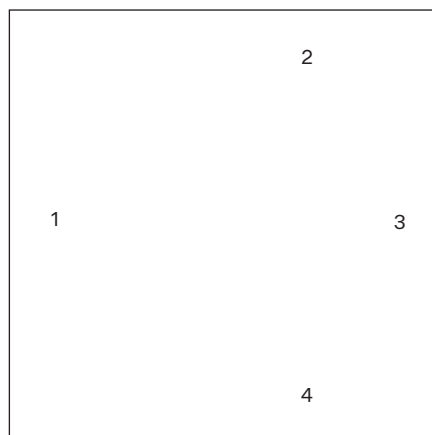
Facebook: White Cube

The gallery is operating with reduced opening hours and timed visiting slots to enable easy social distancing and avoid queues. Advance booking is required. [Book here.](#)

Do not visit if you have any Covid-19 symptoms.
Please use hand sanitiser on entry.
Masks are required while you are inside the gallery.
Please adhere to social distancing.
Children must be kept in hand at all times.

9×9×9

- 1 *Kadmiumrot 6*
1975 / 2017
Acrylic and wood
Three parts, overall: 351 × 148 × 9 cm | 138³/₁₆ × 58¹/₄ × 3⁹/₁₆ in.
- 2 *Kadmiumrot 10*
1975 / 2019
Acrylic and wood
Five parts, overall: 408.3 × 300 × 9 cm | 160³/₄ × 118¹/₈ × 3⁹/₁₆ in.
- 3 *Kadmiumrot 9*
1975 / 2019
Acrylic and wood
Seven parts, overall: 445 × 320 × 9 cm | 175³/₁₆ × 126 × 3⁹/₁₆ in.
- 4 *o.T. (Untitled)*
1975 / 1996
Acrylic and wood
420 × 220 × 8.9 cm | 165³/₈ × 86⁵/₈ × 3¹/₂ in.



SOUTH GALLERY

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|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Kadmiumrot C C1-C5</i>
1975 / 2018
Acrylic on wood
Five parts, overall: 228.2 × 344 × 9 cm 89 ¹³ / ₁₆ × 135 ⁷ / ₁₆ × 3 ³ / ₁₆ in. | 4 | <i>Bild 15.10.2019</i>
2019
Acrylic on aluminium
197 × 301.4 × 4.5 cm 77 ⁹ / ₁₆ × 118 ¹ / ₁₆ × 1 ³ / ₄ in. |
| 2 | <i>Figura Daleth</i>
2020
Acrylic on aluminium
196.4 × 299 × 4.5 cm 77 ⁵ / ₁₆ × 117 ¹ / ₁₆ × 1 ³ / ₄ in. | 5 | <i>Figura Psi</i>
2019
Acrylic on aluminium
239 × 173 × 4.5 cm 94 ¹ / ₈ × 68 ¹ / ₈ × 1 ³ / ₄ in. |
| 3 | <i>Figura He</i>
2020
Acrylic on aluminium
246.5 × 183.6 × 4.5 cm 97 ¹ / ₁₆ × 72 ⁵ / ₁₆ × 1 ³ / ₄ in. | 6 | <i>Hartfaserbild – 160 × 130</i>
1968 / 2017
Hardboard
160 × 130 × 8.6 cm 63 × 51 ¹ / ₁₆ × 3 ³ / ₈ in. |

