

Robert Zandvliet
Le Corps de la Couleur

19th February – 2nd April 2022
Opening Reception: 19th February 2022, 5-9 PM

Robert Zandvliet's paintings may be understood as visual color philosophy. After "Seven Stones" (2013) and "Stage of Being" (2018), Bernhard Knaus Fine Art presents the third solo exhibition of the Dutch artist in the Frankfurt gallery space in spring 2022.

The core of the exhibition is formed by the four large-scale paintings "Abendrot", "Vos", "IJs" and "Git". Each of these works embodies a color to which Zandvliet assigns a suitable form, an image in which the color manifests most optimally. This selection is based on the artist's subjective perception, but its starting point is always the color itself. Against this background, questions arise about the interplay of form and color, which are discussed again and again in the contexts of natural sciences and cultural studies. The titles of the four central new works highlight the interplay of associative and intuitive color perception that is alluded to in them. The term "Vos", for example, carries within it the Dutch name for the animal fox, whose sorrel coloration can be found in the corresponding painting. On the other hand, it is the word used in Dutch to name the kind of chestnut colored horse whose forehead with blaze can also be seen in this work.

The etymological dimension of the "Le Corps de la Couleur" series as well as the motifs, color compositions and genres of its paintings reflect Robert Zandvliet's interest in forms of variation; perhaps they even show a little play. For in his works, the pictorial subjects are reversible figures situated in the space between abstraction and figuration. This detachment from representational traditions as a means of gaining knowledge through painting itself has its starting point in Zandvliet's artistic practice. The artist's use of varying painting techniques enables the exploration of different approaches to a color's physical shape. While the natural deepness of the work "Git" stems from the use of a paint roller and acrylic paint on an unprepared linen canvas, "IJs" displays bits of the underlying canvas and pastose reliefs created with a spatula as points of light that, combined with layers of spray, oil and acrylic paint, let the observer dive deep into a sea of floating ice.

With his "Le Corps de la Couleur" paintings Robert Zandvliet lets the audience participate in his search for the ultimate form of color with regard to phenomena of human perception. In close reference to previous works and series from his oeuvre, the artist thus illuminates color by means of its most elementary components: optical stimuli, physiological valences, and psychological sensation.

The paintings from the workgroup "Le Jardin", which are publicly shown for the first time in this exhibition, also revolve around elemental themes. In this series, Zandvliet develops the idea of the paradisiacal garden and the representation of nature. Without a horizon or the like, the focus in these works is nature's richness of detail and structure instead of the image of a landscape. The expressive brushstroke lets pictorial elements and image planes merge into one another in colors ranging from soft jade green over lively sea green to mysterious evergreen. At its end, Robert Zandvliet offers a new outlook on contemporary painting: a kind of painting that eludes attributions and -isms, which at the same time opens itself to questions about its constitution, perception and interpretation.

Robert Zandvliet (*1970) lives and works in Haarlem, Netherlands. He is represented by Bernhard Knaus Fine Art (Frankfurt), Peter Blum Gallery (New York), Galerie Knoell (Basel) and Galerie Onrust (Amsterdam). Zandvliet has been awarded international art prizes and his works are part of the collection of the Stedelijk Museum, among others.
