

Robert Holyhead

Goethestraße 2/3, 10623 Berlin

24 June – 6 August 2022

Opening: Friday, 24 June, 6 – 8pm

Galerie Max Hetzler is pleased to present an exhibition of new paintings by Robert Holyhead at Goethestraße 2/3, in Berlin. This is the artist's fourth solo exhibition with the gallery.

British painter Robert Holyhead is known for his abstract paintings in semi-transparent colours, that actively engage with how to paint in the present moment. Having previously worked on delicate, small-size formats, the artist has, in recent years, changed his approach towards painting on a larger scale. His original enquiry remains the same, but the different format allows him to innovate and to develop the vocabulary of his work in a new context.

Holyhead spends many months preparing for the works. During this time, his studio practice transforms from the treatment and priming of the canvas surfaces, to drawing or painting in watercolours on paper, until he arrives at the point at which the paintings are ready to be made. During this lead-up, spatial decisions are rigorously tested, and 'positive' and 'negative' visual components meticulously balanced. The paintings are created in long single sessions, not unlike durational performances. Each work is produced in a specific selection of slightly transparent colours, showing visible traces of brushstrokes that operate around precisely located shapes of immaculate white ground. While earlier paintings tended towards single colours, this is less controlled and more complex in the new set of works. There is now a base colour which undergoes subtle adjustment, producing a range of up to four different shades in a painting moving out from a central hue.

Within this more intuitive gesture, the clearly defined white shapes are a call to order. They rationalise the work and bring the viewer back into a more logical space. But they also act as a gateway, an entry point into the painting or indeed an exit from the painted space. Besides from the white shapes, the colours of the works remain transparent, drying quickly and so forcing Holyhead to work against time. The consistency of the format within the group of works is another self-imposed limitation, providing a level playing field for the artist to explore the ideas expressed in the space between the gestural and the conceptual.



Robert Holyhead, *Untitled*, 2021.
Photo: © Jonathan Bassett

Robert Holyhead (*1974, Trowbridge, UK) lives and works in London. His work has been presented in several international solo exhibitions including at Galerie Max Hetzler, London (2019), Paris (2016), and Berlin (2014); Parts Project, The Hague (2016); PEER, London (2012); Gibraltar Walk Studio, London (2008); and Kontainer Gallery, Los Angeles (2006). Selected group exhibitions include Freelands Foundation, London (2019); Tannery Arts, London (2017 and 2015); Ulster Museum, Belfast (2013); Tate Britain, London (2012); and Whitechapel Gallery, London (2009).

Holyhead's works are part of several public collections including Arts Council Collection of Great Britain, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Government Art Collection, London; YUZ Museum, Shanghai; and Tate, London.

Further exhibitions and events:

28 April – 6 August 2022

Günther Förg

Window Gallery, Goethestraße 2/3, 10623 Berlin

28 April – 6 August 2022

Günther Förg

EXPOSITION COLLECTIVE 1974 – 2007

Potsdamer Straße 77 – 87, 10785 Berlin

3 June – 6 August 2022

Tursic & Mille

The Thing

Bleibtreustraße 45 10623 Berlin

Four Studies for a Mound

Bleibtreustraße 15/16, 10623 Berlin

9 June – 6 August 2022

André Butzer

Wanderer

41 Dover Street, London

9 June – 30 July 2022

Charles Gaines

Gridwork: Palm Canyon Watercolors

57, rue du Temple, 75004 Paris

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