

Galería Ehrhardt Flórez

Imi Knoebel

BIG GIRL

From January 28th to March 25th 2023

'BIG GIRL' is Imi Knoebel's new exhibition at Ehrhardt Flórez Gallery.

Colour, form and matter are fundamental questions in the artist's work.

The relationship between painting, space and spectator, and, by extension, the interactions between the public and the essential conditions of art and the world, underpin an exhibition that features varied recent works and series: two pieces from his so-called *Standing Paintings*, made on thin sheets of aluminium slightly separated from the wall, resting on the floor with the help of the aluminium structures and profiles the artist used for pictorial support in previous works; a monochrome, floating and almost resistance-free work from his *Schnitt* series, hung on the wall yet separated from it by a small distance, where certain cuts fragment the pictorial surface; and finally three pieces from his *BIG GIRL* series which gives the exhibition its title, and which, smaller than the others, adhere closely to the wall without free space between, absorbing this space in the thickness and density of the solid aluminium which contrasts with the lightness of the other works on display.

The exhibition is completed in two other rooms with the geometric rhythms of his *Parkhaus* and *Elemente* series, while an as yet unseen group of twelve acrylic works on plastic sheets reveal different versions of the concept of the figure. These rapidly executed floating bodies are in part an explanation of the nature of his work, where a more organic workmanship becomes visible, ranging from opaque to transparent, from ferrous to fluorescent, and from matte to glossy.

Starting from a historical tradition of painting itself, of geometry and of certain avant-garde movements, Imi Knoebel, since his beginnings at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf, has placed himself within limits which constantly open up questions about the essence of art, aesthetics, form and colour, while always advancing towards the new. Now, with a coherent logic in relation to his previous works, he reveals yet another episode in a career decorated with milestones.

Starting from basic yet very precise elements, sometimes repeated, sometimes discovered and explored by other artists, Knoebel reveals ongoing discoveries in which each question in his hands becomes an artefact to be examined for a new reading. Whether in terms of colour, form or position, Knoebel delves into art's sensory dimension. Small variations over time, gestures of great aesthetic and spatial transcendence, become transformative revelations, giving individual elements or the union of several in constellations in a specific place or position an impact on the most basic aspects of our human condition.

Imi Knoebel's work encompasses notions of order and chaos. His work invokes primal sensations in which rhythm, tempo and melody are one and the same. Knoebel's ability to let his works define a space is astonishing. The resonance and reverberation of his works, of his forms embodied in a colour inseparable from form (as developed early on in his relationship with Blinky Palermo), float and occupy the space in such a way as to go far beyond the physical, or rather, to make seemingly intangible space physical.

Imi Knoebel's works are in prominent public collections including the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris; Dia Beacon and Dia Art Foundation, New York; Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht; MMK, Frankfurt; Museu Coleção Berardo, Lisbon; The Broad, Los Angeles; MoMA, New York; MOCA, Los Angeles; Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; Norton Museum, West Palm Beach; and Sammlung Goetz, Munich.

In addition to solo museum exhibitions at the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf in 1975, Kunstmuseum Winterthur and Kunstmuseum Bonn in 1983, and the Deichtorhallen Hamburg in 1992, Knoebel's work was shown at documenta 5 (1972), 6 (1977) and 7 (1982).

In 1996, the Haus der Kunst in Munich organised a large retrospective and the Kestner Gesellschaft in Hanover celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2002 with an exhibition of his work. In 2008, Dia Beacon in New York presented Knoebel's series 24 Farben – für Blinky (1977). The following year, the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin showed some of his most important works. In 2011, he created six monumental stained-glass windows for the Reims Cathedral in France, which had been damaged by German bombing in the First World War. Major exhibitions have followed at Museum der Bildenden Künste Leipzig, Germany (2011); Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany (2014); Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen in Düsseldorf and the Museum Haus Esters in Krefeld, Germany (both 2015); Musée Fernand Léger in Biot, France (2016); Skulpturenpark Waldfrieden, Wuppertal, Germany (2017); Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, Switzerland (2018); Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz, Liechtenstein (2020) and Dia Beacon, New York, USA (2021).

The exhibition in 'BIG GIRL', in Madrid, coincides with a major institutional presentation of Knoebel's works at the Sammlung Goetz, Munich (until 29 April 2023).