

Esther Schipper

Ann Veronica Janssens

spring show

April 26 – June 15, 2024



Ann Veronica Janssens, **31.05.23**, 2023, ribbed glass, structural colors, 100 x 100 x 0,6 cm. Photo © Andrea Rossetti

Esther Schipper is pleased to announce **spring show**, Ann Veronica Janssens' sixth solo exhibition with the gallery. Coming just a year after the artist's celebrated solo presentation at Milan's Pirelli HangarBicocca, **spring show** brings together a wide range of new and historical works by Janssens.

Since the late 1970s, Janssens has developed an artistic practice based on light, color, and natural optical phenomena. She continuously experiments with the characteristic attributes of carefully chosen materials (glass, mirrors, aluminum, artificial fog), shapes, and light, wielding our perception of reality as her medium. Her works give the impression of great simplicity yet create vivid experiences of the act of seeing. With their sense of constant transformation, the works heighten the viewers awareness of the mutability and transience of human cognition.

Featuring a careful arrangement of works, **spring show** in subtle ways materializes the empty space between them. Janssens' "performative sculptures" require observers to move to fully experience them. Each has its own experiential rhythm, as if requiring a set of gestures from visitors to unlock their essence. We peer into the blocks of optical glass and tilt our head to see the light caught in their interior or step back and forth before the panels holding shattered security glass to see their kaleidoscopic colors and luminous spatial effects. Retracing our movement to recapture a color or effect, and finding it changed and not reproducible, the act of looking and the singularity of each experience becomes the focus of **spring show**.

The invitation to interact is made even clearer by **Swings**, which invite us to sit down and feel the air rush past our face, experiencing simultaneously the materiality and the transparency of air. Covered in a heat-reactive film, the seat of the swing reacts to the warmth of the body, and the rainbow-colored traces become part of the sculpture, before slowly disappearing again. There is also a mnemonic aspect to the movement: it takes us back to childhood and the delight in the dizzying effects of disorientation. The natural world, caught in a dialectic of abstraction and figuration, is the subject of **Atlantic**. Characteristic in its elegant simplicity, a pile of nine panes of hammered glass immediately evokes its namesake, and with it, the hypnotic calm of watching the sea.

Works from the series **Structural Color**, panels of ribbed glass covered with a sophisticated bio-chemical nanofilm coating that produces enigmatic forms and colors in a spectrum broader than pigment, attest to Janssens' ceaseless experimentation. Developed in collaboration with Dr. María Boto Ordóñez, scientific researcher at KASK/School of Arts of University College Ghent, the process creates microscopic structural layers that interfere with visible light. The work's delicacy is akin to a butterfly's wing, where this type of color occurs in nature. Any direct touch will destroy the microscopic structure that creates the perception of iridescent colors; the object's vulnerability is another important recurring theme in Janssens' practice. At the same time, **Structural Color** draws attention to the singularity and mutability located in our perception: with each glance, color modulations and forms appear transformed, each glance is unique and irretrievable.

Janssens' emphasis on the present moment and the ephemerality of perception, comes with a leavening of immutability and force. Glass after all is both easily broken yet also incredibly strong and durable. Its beauty harbors an element of danger. The shattered security glass of **Magic Mirror Chill Sapphire** is an embodiment of this, as is the inherent dichotomy of a controlled destruction, a pattern from thousands of minute accidental breaks that can be traced to one action. **Heat**, a new work from the artist's series of gold-leaf covered objects, beautifully encapsulates this tension: made from gilded mosquito netting, **Heat** can be understood as complex deliberation on contemporary life and ecology. The net, a material used to avert nuisance but also illness, is covered in a substance that, with its sunny glow, represents both the warmth of energy and its potentially destructive force. The work makes visible the movement of the air, as it is gently animated by the breeze (created perhaps by a fellow visitor, swinging through the space nearby), and with it, with subtly beauty, the connection between all things, of all beings at any moment in time becomes apparent.

Ann Veronica Janssens was born in 1956 in Folkestone, England. She studied at L'École de la Cambre in Brussels. The artist lives and works in Brussels.

Among her numerous solo exhibitions are: **pinkyellowblue**, M Woods Museum, Beijing (2023); **Grand Bal**, Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan (2023); **Entre le crépuscule et le ciel**, Collection Lambert, Avignon (2022); **23:56:04**, Panthéon, Paris (2022); **5766 chemin des Trious**, Fondation CAB, Saint-Paul-de-Vence (2022); **gam gam gam**, Galleria d'Arte Moderna – GAM, Milan (2021); **Hot Pink Turquoise**, South London Gallery, London (2020–21) and Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk (2020); **Green, Yellow and Pink** (as part of CONNECT, BTS), Dongdaemun Design Plaza (DDP), Seoul (2020); **Ann Veronica Janssens**, De Pont Museum, Tilburg (2018–19); **Ann Veronica Janssens**, Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki (2018–19); **mars**, IAC, Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes (2017); **Ann Veronica Janssens**, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas (2016); **Ann Veronica Janssens: yellowbluepink**, Wellcome Collection, London (2015);

Janssens's work is held in the collections of Caldic Collection – Museum Voorlinden, Wassenaar; De Pont Museum, Tilburg; Institut d'art contemporain Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes; FNAC, Paris; Les Abattoirs – FRAC Midi-Pyrénées, Toulouse; FRAC Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Dunkerque; 49 Nord 6 Est – FRAC Lorraine, Metz; FRAC Aquitaine, Bordeaux; FRAC Bourgogne, Dijon; FRAC Pays de la Loire, Carquefou; FRAC Languedoc-Roussillon, Montpellier; FRAC Corse, Corte; FRAC Franche-Comté, Besançon; Fundación Jumex, Mexico City; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk; mac, Marseille; Mona – Museum of Old and New Art, Tasmania; MUHKA, Antwerp; Musée national d'art moderne – Centre Pompidou, Paris; Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels; Museu Coleção Berardo, Lisbon; Mu.ZEE, Oostende; Musée des Arts Contemporains – Grand Hornu; Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas; S.M.A.K., Gent; Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv.

For press inquiries please contact David Ulrichs. Tel: +49 (0) 176 50 33 01 35 or david@davidulrichs.com

ESTHER SCHIPPER GMBH
POTSDAMER STRASSE 81E
D-10785 BERLIN
TEL: +49 (0)30 374433133
OFFICE@ESTHERSCHIPPER.COM
WWW.ESTHERSCHIPPER.COM