

## **Richard Tuttle**

### **1, 2, 3**

Galleri Nicolai Wallner is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new works by renowned artist Richard Tuttle. The exhibition is entitled *1, 2, 3* and features textiles works, works on paper, and sculptures.

One of the currents that runs throughout Tuttle's work is that it has, throughout his influential career, continually escaped categorization. Instead of limiting or defining himself through a specific medium or style, Tuttle focuses instead on elements of composition such as line, shape, texture and color as well as the differences inherent in a variety of materials—both conventional and unconventional. The result is a body of work that has an incredible physical and spatial presence.

Each of Tuttle's works retains an elegant, abstract character, yet at the same time possesses a figurative quality as well. As such, each element of a work becomes a potential symbol, an opening up of a narrative within the work as well as within relation to other works in the context of the exhibition space. In other words, what becomes central to the work, is understanding the intention behind its specific compositional construction. Are the works created purely for their aesthetic qualities, are they created instead to tell a story, or perhaps both? The relationship and the dichotomy between the narrative and the aesthetic are explored throughout Tuttle's exhibition.

The use of the horizontal line and perspective quite literally runs through the works in *1, 2, 3*. This is most evident in *Sharing 1-25*, where series of graphite and watercolor lines figure on the bottom of small, narrow, horizontal papers. The lines draw the spectator's eye along the exhibition space, giving the work a sense of movement, as it becomes necessary to physically move to observe all twenty-five components of the work. *Walking on Air* continues the idea of the horizontal line, as two long pieces of dyed cloth are installed one on top of the other, creating a line as they overlap. The creation of this line through installation reveals its delicate and non-permanent nature, highlighting the spaces above and below that allow the line to be created.

With Tuttle's works for Bergen Kunsthall, the line is subtle, changing depending on where the spectator stands in relation to the work. From straight on, the lines appear cohesive and two-dimensional, with the steel bars overlapping each other almost as if in a drawing or painting. Yet as soon as the spectator moves to either side, the lines change, separating from each other and revealing a very specific set of three-dimensional angles.

While this focus on lines can be understood as a purely aesthetic exploration of space, there is also an inherent story. The idea of the horizontal line refers to very specific symbolism, a reference to a perpetual forward motion, or to a linear progression. Internal to this idea is the sentiment that what comes next must somehow be better than what has come before, that moving forwards necessarily implies progress in the positive sense. It thus becomes the task of the spectator to bring together the aesthetic and the narrative, and to interpret what Tuttle intends in regards to this line with all of its changes, breaks and non-permanence, and what progression it might be alluding to.

The title of the exhibition *1, 2, 3* can therefore conceivably be understood as the enumeration of ways of interpretation, revealing the multifaceted quality of Tuttle's work and, on a greater scale, revealing the multifaceted quality of art in general.

An inspiration to generations of artists, Richard Tuttle (b.1941, USA) has exhibited extensively around the world and has had many exhibitions throughout his career, notably a touring retrospective of his work in 2005 that showed at Whitney Museum of American Art (New York), Des Moines Art Centre (Des Moines), Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago) and Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles) among others. In the fall of 2014, he will show a new commissioned work in the famous Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern (London).