

Albert Oehlen

17 May - 25 June 2014

Opening: 17 May, 5-8 pm



Albert Oehlen, *Untitled*, 2014. Oil on board. 170 x 210 cm.

Galerie Max Hetzler is delighted to announce the opening of a space in Paris on **Saturday 17th May**.

The inaugural exhibition will be dedicated to recent paintings of **Albert Oehlen**. German artist born in 1954, Oehlen is a major figure on the international art scene. His career started in the 80's with figurative paintings, which were clearly defying the context of the time, predominated by minimal and conceptual art, by the work of Joseph Beuys and Arte Povera. His provocative position, subjects and manner have been linked to the notion of *Bad Painting* throughout the early eighties alongside artists like Werner Büttner and Martin Kippenberger, all of which started exhibiting at that time with Galerie Max Hetzler, then based in Cologne.

Albert Oehlen has moved towards abstract painting in the late eighties, continuously redefining his own vocabulary, testifying to an undeniable singularity. His first abstract paintings were succeeded, among others, by black & white computer based paintings, collaged canvases with fragments of advertising posters and paint applied on top, *Fingermalerei* (*Finger Paintings*) in the 2000's, paintings fully covered with poster cutouts and finally the latest ones, which will be shown for the first time in this exhibition in Paris. The last mentioned are particularly dynamic, devoid of any trace of collage, they combine gestural brushstrokes with finger painted motifs. Both a prolongation and a continuation of previous manners, the recent paintings witness once again Oehlen's creative strength, seemingly questioning the legacy of the anterior generation of artists like Gerhard Richter and Sigmar Polke, two German painters who, like Oehlen, innovated and redefined painting.

„It was in materials, expression, history and genre – in everything his immediate predecessors had progressively demolished (...) that Oehlen stated his determination not to give in. His possibility of painting had to be built from the foundations. Not gratuitous transgressions, no irony or cynicism – even if it is true that some used these terms to disparage his efforts to be free of artistic propriety. Instead Oehlen went looking where nobody else did, plunging into the piles of detritus abandoned by the wayside of an era. Then a final task remained: that of interweaving painting as history with the position of the painter and with the society out of which both painting and painter emerge in order to reflect on it.“

Anne Pontégnie, *The History of Abstraction seemed to be finished*, in *Albert Oehlen*, Galerie Max Hetzler and Holzwarth Publications, Berlin, 2011

A catalogue with an essay by Jean-Pierre Criqui will be published.

Albert Oehlen has exhibited, among other institutions, at Kunsthalle Zürich (1987), Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (1994), Renaissance Society, Chicago (1995), Kunsthalle Basel (1997), Musée d'art moderne et contemporain de Strasbourg (2002), Musée Cantonal des Beaux Arts, Lausanne (2004), Secession, Vienna (2004), MOCA, Miami (2005), Whitechapel, London (2006), Musée d'Art Moderne de la ville de Paris (2009), Carré d'Art de Nîmes (2011), Kunstmuseum Bonn (2012), and at mumok, Vienna (2013). Upcoming solo shows include the New Museum in New York (2015). His work is featured in major private and public collections including Musée d'Art Moderne de la ville de Paris, Musées de Strasbourg, Carré d'Art de Nîmes, Centre Pompidou - Musée national d'art moderne, Art Institute of Chicago, MoMa (New York), SFMOMA (San Francisco), MOCA (Los Angeles), MOCA (Miami), Tate Modern (London), Brandhorst Museum (Munich), Museum für Moderne Kunst (Frankfurt), Ludwig Museum (Cologne), as well as Reina Sofia (Madrid).

Currently on view / upcoming:

Galerie Max Hetzler, **Bleibtreustrasse 45, Berlin**

Richard Phillips (May 02 - June 07)

Halftone: Through the Grid (June 14 – July 26)

Galerie Max Hetzler, **Goethestrasse 2/3, Berlin**

Robert Holyhead (May 02 - June 07)

Vera Lutter (June 14 – July 26)

For further information and images please contact presse@maxhetzler.com or see maxhetzler.com