

ROB PRUITT
MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES
SEPT 13 – OCT 25 2014

Gavin Brown's enterprise is pleased to present MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES, an exhibition of new paintings and sculptures by Rob Pruitt. For his first exhibition at the gallery since 2010, Pruitt leaves behind his trademark mixture of pop extravagance and pointed social critique, turning inward to further explore the multiple personalities that have influenced his markedly different bodies of work.

In the latest from his ongoing series of "Suicide Paintings," the stark combinations of hand-painted gradients employ a color palette suggestive of sea and sky, each intimating a threshold into a potentially infinite expanse. These spectral fields simultaneously recall Rothko's emotionally resonant abstractions, the celestial background of a Mac startup screen, and the window out of which Yves Klein leapt into the void. Regardless of any connotations given by the title of the series, what lies beyond the surface of each painting remains ambiguous.

Pruitt will also introduce a new body of paintings based on a series of automatic drawings made during his ongoing therapy sessions. Enlarged and printed with a VUTEK QS3200 printer over heavily impastoed surfaces, the paintings unveil the inner-workings of the artist's mind by reproducing gestures that originate from the sanctity of the therapist's couch. Areas of each painting are later overpainted by hand, suggesting the fluidity of memory and its capacity to be revised. Alongside this work is a parallel project rendered by a chorus of his studio assistants who have covered upholstered sofas and plywood table tops with unrestricted and unedited drawings made during lunch breaks, resulting in surfaces that gush like rivers of multiple streams of consciousness.

Aiming to replicate the chaos and the calm within each of us, Pruitt's new work is about contemplating options rather than objects, and considering passageways to new places rather than choosing to remain still. These pieces urge us to see beyond our self-imposed walls. In the words of the late poet Maggie Estep, "think of this as a window." *

Rob Pruitt was born in Washington, DC, and studied at the Corcoran College of Art and Design in Washington, DC, and Parsons School of Design in New York. His work has been included in numerous museum exhibitions including a 2013 mid-career retrospective at the Aspen Art Museum, a solo exhibition at Dallas Contemporary (2011), Freiburg Kunstverein (2012); Le Consortium, Dijon (2002); and group shows such as "Empire State" at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome (2012), "Pop Life" at Tate Modern (2009), and "Mapping the Studio" at Punta Della Dogana/Palazzo Grassi, Venice (2009). In 2009, he debuted the "Rob Pruitt's Art Awards," at the Guggenheim Museum, an award show for the art world fashioned after the Oscars. In 2011, he was commissioned by the Public Art Fund to install "The Andy Monument," a highly polished chrome sculpture of Andy Warhol (replete with shopping bags) in New York's Union Square near the site of Warhol's Factory. An exhibition at Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit is scheduled for May 2015. He lives and works in New York.

* Estep, Maggie. "Think of This as a Window." Essay in *Goodbye to All of That: Writers on Loving & Leaving New York*, published by Seal Press, New York.

