

PIETER VERMEERSCH

14th November 2014 – 17th January 2015

For Pieter Vermeersch's third solo show at the Carl Freedman Gallery the artist presents three distinct bodies of work: wall paintings, paintings on canvas and marble works. Physically they each have different dimensional qualities, the wall paintings being super flat, the paintings on canvas being objects but very much about surface, while the marble works have a pronounced physical presence further enhanced by the way they hover slightly off the wall. With no particular hierarchy these three layers come together as a whole, unified by the way they each, in their own way, engage with time.

The wall paintings are made over several days, yet when finished they leave no trace of the manual effort. In fact they appear effortless and weightless, almost transparent as if hardly even there. It's a subtle, yet alluring illusion. As we try to grasp what actually is there, what must be material, and the eye and body traverses the gradient we experience colour coming into being from a state of zero presence, ie. from white or the wall itself. This coming into being can be experienced both instantaneously as each wall painting can be visually consumed as a whole, as well as incrementally.

The paintings on canvas may look like pure abstractions but are meticulous copies of photographs. The photographs are of skies at sunset printed in negative, making the paintings a step removed from the subject, which are not the point of interest for Vermeersch. Rather it is the sky as changing light, as time passing to which our own internal circadian clock is tuned. They are painted like a printer, in an analytical, mechanical way, starting from the top and working back and forth and slowly down, brush marks being smoothed into one continuous plain of shifting colour. Like the wall paintings they are made over a period of time, typically a full day, an expenditure and duration of effort that we intuit as present, but again cannot fully grasp.

Slicing into a rock of marble to create a slab from its interior, polishing it to make it smooth so it can be further looked into, is an excavation of deep geological time. It is something unknown, a world impossible to analyse – too large or, in other words, sublime. The brush strokes here are visible, and their immediacy palpable. The paint comes straight from the palette crudely mixed, if at all, and smeared on or daubed. The paint marks are in part an attempt to find a relationship to the stone, a conversation with its carbonate flow and crystallization. In part they exist separately, a kind of a primitive mark-making in defiance of the marble's resoluteness and symbolic luxury value. Either way, together, the trace of the hand is undeniably there, making a connection to the stones distant existence and bringing it back to the here and now.

Pieter Vermeersch is one of Belgium's leading artists. Born in Kortrijk, 1973, he has shown extensively in private and public galleries internationally. Solo shows include Team Gallery, New York, Galerie Perrotin, Paris and Hong Kong, ProjecteSD, Barcelona and Greta Meert, Brussels. Recent public installations include Galeries Lafayette, Biarritz, France (commissioned by Citynove) and Les silos à sel at Site de la Voirie, Geneva, Switzerland. He lives and works in Brussels.

The exhibition will be open from Tuesday – Friday 11 – 6 pm and Saturday 12 – 6 pm, otherwise by appointment. For images and further information please contact the gallery on 020 7684 8890, or email info@carlfreedman.com

List of Works (clockwise from entrance):

Untitled, 2014

Oil on marble

35 x 29.2 cm

Untitled Yellow (0-25%), 2014

Acrylic on wall

Dimensions variable

Untitled, 2014

Oil on marble

57.5 x 42.1 cm

Untitled, 2014

Oil on canvas

150 x 111 cm

Untitled, 2014

Oil on marble

35 x 28.5 cm

Untitled Black, (0-25%), 2014

Acrylic on wall

Dimensions variable

Untitled, 2014

Oil on marble

91 x 63 cm

Untitled Blue, (0-25%), 2014

Acrylic on wall

Dimensions variable

Untitled, 2014

Oil on marble

42.3 x 34.7 cm

Untitled, 2014

Oil on marble

39.5 x 34.7 cm

Untitled, 2014

Oil on canvas

150 x 111 cm

Untitled, 2014

Oil on marble

39.3 x 36.8 cm

Untitled, 2014

Oil on marble

134.5 x 174.5 cm