

Robert Holyhead

Paris: 57, rue du Temple, 6 February – 12 March 2016



Opening: 6 February, 6-8 pm

Galerie Max Hetzler is pleased to present **Robert Holyhead's** first solo exhibition in France and the artist's second show with the gallery.

The British painter Robert Holyhead invites us to explore positive and negative forms, a balancing act between composition and tint. A reduced palette allows him to explore abstraction through delicate, semi-translucent colours. Each work is meticulously crafted; the limited range of shape and colour allowing for experimentation.

Unframed watercolour drawings are poised on stark white shelves. These monochrome minatures should not be seen as studies for paintings but rather as a window into Robert Holyhead's thought process, thereby creating a "fluid bank of ideas", that, as in a language, can continuously evolve and inform.

By contrast, the oil-paintings are presented individually, further questioning colour and shape, but never quite resorting to bare abstraction. "They don't rely on any sort of figurative imagery, yet at the same time there's a problem for me if I tried to make pure abstract paintings. I don't even know what that is. The external world appears in a very complex and unrecognised way."

Visible traces of brushstroke lay bare the energy of the composition. A thin layer of paint is wiped from the canvas by brush, cloth or thumb, revealing the immaculate white ground beneath. As negative counterparts, these void areas play a singular role, seemingly floating at the foreground at times, but also cutting through the canvas. Viewing the paintings, we experience the tension between radiance and blurring, conflict and tranquillity, as if we were contemplating stained-glass windows.

Robert Holyhead works at a fascinating pace, sometimes spending several months contemplating the structure, only to complete it in a few days. "If the painting is already precise yet still allows for a type of openness then I know it is near to being something that is almost finished."

A new group of paintings as well as a large installation of sixty drawings will be featured in this exhibition.

"I'm trying to allow dialogue to develop over time, maybe with someone who is thinking through painting. I want to continue a type of guardianship of this kind of painting and thinking into the future. I don't want to force anything upon anyone or to have ownership over the works. I am trying to present something familiar that is full of un-familiarity, maybe something like adopting a new language. Viewers may already recognise something outside of the paintings, something based on the outside world, on a skewed geometry, for example."

Robert Holyhead, London, July 2010 in Robert Holyhead, Karsten Schubert and Ridinghouse, 2010

Robert Holyhead (b. 1974, Trowbridge, UK) lives and works in London. His work has been presented in several solo exhibitions including PEER, London (2012), Karsten Schubert, London (2012) and Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin (2014). Group exhibitions were held at Whitechapel Gallery, London (2012), Ulster Museum, Belfast (2013) and

RAUMX, London (2014) among others. His works are part of several public collections such as Arts Council Collection of Great Britain and Tate Collection, London. In 2010, he was commissioned by the Government Art Collection to produce two site-specific works for the New British Embassy and the UK Permanent Representation to the European Union in Brussels.

Further exhibitions and fair participations:

Paris

Darren Almond

19 March - 16 April 2016

Opening: 19 March, 6-8 pm

57, rue du Temple 75004 Paris

Berlin

Jeff Elrod

12 March - 23 April 2016

Opening: 12 March, 6-8 pm

Bleibtreustraße 45, Berlin-Charlottenburg

Albert Oehlen

12 March - 23 April 2016

Opening: 12 March, 6-8 pm

Goethestraße 2/3, Berlin-Charlottenburg

ART COLOGNE

13 - 17 April 2016

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