

Darren Almond

...beyond reach but within reason

Paris: 57, rue du Temple, 19 March – 16 April 2016



Opening: 19 March, 6-8 pm

Galerie Max Hetzler is delighted to present *...beyond reach but within reason*, a solo exhibition with recent paintings by **Darren Almond**.

Underpinning Almond's sculptures, films, photographs and paintings is an exploration of time and space as metrics of *being*: ways of measuring, conceptualising and understanding what it means to be here on earth. His *Timescape* paintings, which stretch these

concerns to their furthest spatial magnitude, visualise the outer reaches of the cosmos: remote fields of coloured stars, gleaming auroras, and measureless dark empyreans.

Informed by but not directly based on deep-space photography, the *Timescapes* figure what lies beyond – far beyond – that which Almond has suggested is the furthest marker of distance we can really comprehend, the moon. Past this, our lexicon for scale runs out and we require the digital language of numbers, as figured in Almond's ongoing series of number paintings, here exemplified by a mirrored work that, again, inserts the individual viewer (and time) into the equation. Continue onward to where numbers become too large to have meaning, and the usable language that remains is that which the paintings speak: that of abstraction, even the sublime.

When we look into deep space, we are of course moving back through time. Our astronomers are looking at reflected light; moreover, given recent scientific breakthroughs concerning gravitational waves, they are now able to observe a time beyond the visual field. Almond has long folded time and space together in single images and objects, as in his long-exposure *Fullmoon* photographs, and it was on a *Fullmoon* shoot in the unpolluted air of Patagonia, in 2013, that Almond first truly saw the colours of stars, their various wavelengths of light. His *Timescape* paintings – like the time-based Hubble photographs, based themselves on transcripts of fields of data and made dreamily readable by artificially applied tints – are powered by colour. Despite their darkness, there is no black in these works, a nod (as Almond has noted) to Heinrich Wilhelm Olbers's 'dark night sky paradox': they are, rather, made up of layers of pigment-rich Aquacryl. They figure colour as the way we conceptualise extreme cosmic distance, a schematic language beyond words and numbers. And a very human one, perhaps most appropriate for an age of increased consciousness and insecurity about our infinitesimal place in the universe.

The *Timescape* paintings also move beyond the human in other ways. Compositionally they use formats of controlled chance, with Almond upsetting the rhythms and motor control-driven pattern creation that come with manual application of coloured dots, not infrequently creating looming voids – the void space being a longstanding focus of his – and decentered compositions. Unlike the gridded format of earlier star maps he has made (from 2000 onwards), these paintings assume landscape and portrait formats, tipping the scale from scientific control into the speculative, the painterly, the explicitly analogue. The *Timescape* paintings, then, are anchored by a practice that has consistently questioned how we, as individuals and as a species, fix our position in the universe, and the consequences of doing so. At the same time, however, they venture deep into uncharted territory.

Darren Almond (*1971, born in Wigan, England) lives and works in London. He had solo exhibitions at SCAI the Bathhouse, Tokyo (2016); Kunsthaus Graz, Graz (2015); Domaine de Chaumont-sur-Loire, Chaumont-sur-Loire (2012); Villa Merkel, Esslingen; or FRAC Haute Normandie, Sotteville-lès-Rouen (2011) among others. His work was included in several group shows such as *Fire under Snow*, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk (2016); *The Nothing That Is*, Royal Academy of Arts, London; *Photographing Monet in Gardens: Five Contemporary Views*, Musée des Impressionismes, Giverny (2015). Several of his works are currently featured in the exhibition *Sublime, les tremblements du monde* at Centre Pompidou- Metz. Darren Almond's works are held in major collections including Fondation Beyeler, Basel; Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris; FRAC Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand; Museum Folkwang, Essen; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; MoMA, New York or Tate Gallery, London.

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57, rue du Temple 75004 Paris

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Opening: 12 March, 6-8 pm

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Jeff Elrod

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Opening: 12 March, 6-8 pm

Bleibtreustrasse 45, Berlin-Charlottenburg

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ART COLOGNE

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