

GREENE NAFTALI

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Günther Förg

Works on Paper: 1976 – 2008

September 9 – October 8, 2016

8th Floor

Greene Naftali is pleased to announce an exhibition of works by Günther Förg (1952 – 2013), the artist's third solo presentation at the gallery and the first in the United States to survey the artist's decades-long production on paper.

A seminal post-war German artist, Förg — who was a peer of Martin Kippenberger and Albert Oehlen— maintained a uniquely interdisciplinary practice that positioned painting in dialogue with photography, sculpture, and architecture. Interested in investigating modernism and its legacy, Förg challenged artistic conventions, equally considering the pictorial field, the frame, and the physical space beyond it. Förg's works on paper represent another discipline through which he examined these concerns.

Spanning over 30 years, the works on view demonstrate Förg's active engagement with this medium, directly applying acrylic, oil, and gouache onto the surfaces of Canson, hand-made, or graph papers. Working in a range of scales, from the monumental to the intimate, Förg approached each with gestural fluency and an improvisational hand, addressing formal and chromatic relations on a two-dimensional surface. Geometrically partitioned fields of painted hues, magnified cross-hatches on gray surfaces, and colorful aggregations of tight, looping gestures are framed behind highly reflective glass—a tactic that Förg used to integrate the subject and his surroundings into the work.

A suite of ten large-scale works rendered in variations of chalkboard gray and tones of terra cotta and ultramarine wrap around the gallery wall, and are sampled from Förg's historic exhibition in 1997 at Haus für konstruktive und konkrete Kunst, Zürich. Presented uniformly, the works address the architecture of the space, a key consideration of Förg's throughout his career. The largest work in the show, *Untitled* (1990), behaves as a paper analogue to Förg's lead paintings, lifting the Barnett Newman-inspired zip from the weighted format in which it most commonly appears. Also on view are Förg's celebrated 2008 series, *Aller Retour*; and a series of gouaches, each partitioned into two colors discordant in their immediate pairing, yet harmonic in the larger context of their suite.

Günther Förg lived and worked in Switzerland (1952-2013). Select solo exhibitions include Museum Brandhorst, Munich (2014); Sammlung Grässlin, Sankt Georgen (2012); Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2009); Kunsthalle Bremen, Bremen (2006); Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel (2006); Kunsthaus Bregenz, Bregenz (2001); Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin (2000); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1995); and Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach (1989). His work has also been included in numerous group exhibitions including *Contemporary Galleries: 1980–Now*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2011); *Flashback - eine Revision der Kunst der 80er Jahre*, Kunstmuseum Basel, Basel (2005); *Sammlung Speck*, Museum Ludwig, Cologne (1996); *documenta IX*, Kassel (1992); and *Carnegie International*, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (1988).

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