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PER KIRKEBY:  
PAINTINGS AND BRONZES FROM THE 1980S  
2 JUNE - 16 SEPTEMBER 2017

OPENING RECEPTION: 1 JUNE, 6-8PM

Michael Werner Gallery, London is pleased to present an exhibition of works from the 1980s by Per Kirkeby. With a selection of more than twenty-five paintings and bronze sculptures, this exhibition explores an important period in Kirkeby's oeuvre, one which has not previously been shown in such depth.

The foundational importance of the natural sciences to Kirkeby's painting is well established: the artist traveled extensively in the Arctic and Greenland in the early 1960s while working towards his master's degree in geology. Equally important to his development as a painter are the many experiments with architecture and performance Kirkeby carried out during his student days and into the 1970s. At Copenhagen's Experimental Art School, several of Kirkeby's Fluxus-inspired activities seized upon notions of shelter and the interrelationship of interior and exterior spaces, both natural and man-made. The brick became an important pictorial and sculptural device in Kirkeby's paintings and performances and eventually led the artist to complete his first brick sculpture in 1973. Kirkeby's concurrent travels in Central America exposed him to Mayan art and architecture, further intensifying his interest in the possibilities of structural form. The artist's paintings and sculptures of the 1980s are the distillation of these experiences. Created with a new conceptual focus on recurring motifs, this body of work further develops Kirkeby's fascination with the intersection of abstraction and the natural world. The expressive possibilities of light and form are expanded through Kirkeby's personalised vocabulary of natural and architectural imagery.

Per Kirkeby is one of the most important painters of his generation. His first exhibition coincided with the completion of his studies in geology, in 1964. Kirkeby represented Denmark in the 1976 Venice Biennale and later participated in documenta VII and documenta IX. Important solo museum exhibitions include Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; Kunsthalle Bern; Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk and BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels. Though widely exhibited throughout Europe, Kirkeby's work has not often been seen in London. The artist participated in *A New Spirit in Painting* at the Royal Academy in 1981 and was the subject of a major retrospective exhibition at the Tate Modern in 2009. A retrospective of painting and sculpture was organised by The Phillips Collection, Washington DC, in 2012. Works by Kirkeby are found in many museum collections including the Tate, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and Museum of Modern Art, New York, among many others.

*Per Kirkeby: Paintings and Bronzes from the 1980s* opens 2 June at Michael Werner Gallery in London and is on view through 16 September 2017. The exhibition will be accompanied by a full-colour catalogue featuring an essay by Peter Schjeldahl. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10AM to 6PM. For more information please contact the gallery at [press@michaelwerner.com](mailto:press@michaelwerner.com), visit [www.michaelwerner.com](http://www.michaelwerner.com) or contact Ellie Davidson, Sutton at [ellie@suttonpr.com](mailto:ellie@suttonpr.com). Follow the gallery on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [Facebook](#).