

IMI KNOEBEL

ANIMA MUNDI

25 JUNE — 29 JULY 2011

Opening in the presence of the artist, Saturday 25 June from 6 :30pm to 8 :30pm

PRESS RELEASE

Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is pleased to announce *Anima Mundi*, a solo exhibition by the renowned German artist, **Imi Knoebel**. In this selection of new works Knoebel illustrates the brilliance of his minimalist approach to color in a series of small paintings: five single, two pairs, two groups of three, two four and two five part works that all reflect the highly personal clear view the artist has of color and geometry.

Since his earliest work in the 1960's he has taken a reductivist position that has made him a singular artist of graduating tonalities and surfaces. The influences of the Bauhaus movement are clearly identifiable in his oeuvre. This new group of paintings show the importance of color and geometry as Wassily Kandinsky and Johannes Itten theorized it.

Each painting is constructed in the same manner, in five parts. The colored nuances associated to this repeated geometric construction create moments of attraction and contradiction, of balance or disharmony. The combinations generate a sensation, a vibration. *Anima Mundi 45-3* is a practically atonal minimal triptych in three variations of pale green, grey and white/silver. A single black horizontal line balances the three identical forms. *Anima Mundi 44-3* plays with the striking contrasts of red and yellow with shades of pink.

A certain impression of violence emanates from this playful composition. The larger groupings read almost like signal flags on the wall but it is actually about pure abstraction. The installation is enriched through its dichotomy; the colored signs interact with each other like in a musical score. Knoebel's paintings bring us to the heart of Kandinsky's reflection on the power of colors on our soul: "Color is the keyboard, the eyes are the hammers, the soul is the piano with its many chords. The artist is the hand that, by touching this or that key, causes vibrations in the soul."

Imi Knoebel was born in Dassau, Germany on 1940. From 1962-64, he studied applied arts at the Darmstadt School of Arts and Crafts. Knoebel's studies followed the theories put forth by Johannes Itten and Lászlo Moholy-Nagy of the Bauhaus in Weimar and Dassau. In 1964-71 he studied at the Staatliche Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf, under Joseph Beuys.

After puristic line-drawings, light projections and white pictures (1972-75), he used colour for the first time in 1974, and in 1975 he started to make overlapping coloured rectangles painted with Menninge (an industrial rustproof paint), and latterly brightly coloured, expressive colour combinations on laminated plywood and metal plates.

Important museum exhibitions include: Dia: Beacon, New York (2008); Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen am Rhein (2007); Henry Moore Institute, Leeds (2006); Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg (2004); Kunstverein Braunschweig, Brunswick (2002); and Haus der Kunst, Munich (1996).

GALERIE THADDAEUS ROPAC

For the 800-year anniversary of the Reims Cathedral, Imi Knoebel was invited to do six stained glass windows.

For further information regarding the exhibition, please contact Jill Silverman van Coenegrachts, jill.silvermanvc@ropac.net.

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