

BERNARD PIFFARETTI

*Calligram*

15 September – 21 October 2017

We are delighted to announce Bernard Piffaretti's first solo exhibition in London. The exhibition charts Piffaretti's consistent methodology; since 1986 Piffaretti has committed his practice to the "duplication method", abstract paintings that appear to be two identical halves split through the vertical axis. Closer inspection reveals moments of differentiation: the inclination of the brushstrokes, the number of drips, the weight of the hue. For his first exhibition at Kate MacGarry, Piffaretti exhibits works spanning three decades – "The duplication clouds the origin of the time of the work. All supremacy is abolished, and that is the subject of my painting".

While the duplication method is a statement of conceptual rigour, it also draws attention to the gestural qualities of the paintings; the matching sides encourage us to examine the subtle nuances between the two halves. The paintings often have a vertical spine, hiding in plain sight down the center of the canvas. Piffaretti calls attention to this spine by shifting its tone or hue in a direction that skews the palette established in rest of the painting. He not only uses the technique as a compositional tool but also as an instrument to trigger action; the colours, shapes and lines subsequently move, repeat and rotate on the canvas. Furthermore, the system allows him to exhibit the simple yet essential principles of painting.

However, the paintings must always be understood as elements of a whole. One side does not attempt to copy or imitate the other, rather establishes the notions of temporality, of abstraction and of the act of looking. "The calligram is a common form to the visible and the enunciable...the painting will in the end never represent anything, it will present painting, it will represent itself in its intimacy and its difference" (Bernard Piffaretti, 1998).

Bernard Piffaretti was born in 1955 in Saint-Etienne, France. He lives and works in Paris. From 1974-79 he studied at the École des Beaux-Arts, Saint-Etienne. Piffaretti's work has been the subject of solo museum exhibitions at the Frac Haute-Normandie, Rouen, France, 2010; Musée d' Art Moderne, Saint-Etienne, France, 2009; Musée Matisse, Le Cateau- Cambrésis, France, 2008; Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art/MAMCO, Geneva, Switzerland, 2007; Beaumont Public Gallery, Luxembourg, Germany, 2006; Sara Hilden Art Museum, Tampere, Switzerland, 2001; Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art, Paris, France, 2000; and Villa Arson, Nice, France, 1991. Other recent solo exhibitions include: *Passage (à la ligne)*, galerie frank elbaz, Paris, France, 2016; *No Chronology*, Klemm's, Berlin, Germany, 2016; *Moving Pictures*, Cherry and Martin, Los Angeles, USA, 2015. He has also exhibited in group shows at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Hong Kong Museum; CAPC Museum of Contemporary Art, Bordeaux, France; Joan Miro Foundation, Barcelona, Spain; National Gallery of the Grand Palais, Paris, France; and Switzerland Museum of Fine Arts, Bern, Switzerland.