

LISSON GALLERY

NEW YORK

LONDON

504 West 24th Street
NY 10011 USA

27 Bell Street
NW1 5BU UK

138 10th Avenue
NY 10011 USA

67 Lisson Street
NW1 5DA UK

+1 212 505 6431

+44 (0)20 7724 2739

Press Release

Jason Martin

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504 W 24th Street, New York

Jason Martin presents a new body of paintings for his first exhibition at Lisson Gallery New York. The works on display continue Martin's investigation of the fundamentals of painting, his experimentation beyond its traditional boundaries into three-dimensional space and his recent re-engagement with oil paint.

To produce these works, Martin begins with minimal means – no more than three colors, often similar in tonality, as well as just a handful of tools or brushes and a number of vertically aligned, aluminum panels. Despite these self-imposed limitations, Martin's latest series veer from epic and luscious compositions of swirling dark oils to pared-down and muted abstractions in smoky off-whites. Formed of horizontal bands being swept to and fro across the surface, the paintings are loaded with varying quantities of paint, resulting perhaps in significant spillages, impasto ridges and arabesque whorls or else in smaller, incidental edges, ripples and smears. These parallel strata are built up from repeated, physical gestures – a process that Martin has honed since his days at Goldsmiths College in London in the early 1990s – although are created here, not by mechanical comb-like tools, but through precise and controlled gestures, albeit with the intervention of chance, moments of happenstance and the occasional swirl of chaos.

Far from monochromes, these works are subtly gradated essays in harmonic relationships between hues and are essentially mixed during their making, as evidenced by the subtitles to each work, which includes the color combination employed, such as: Titanium White, Dutch Brown and Scheveningen Blue. These tripartite pieces lend themselves to three or more 'horizon lines', although smaller panels, often composed of two colors, such as French Cassel Earth and French Ardoise Grey, are just as complex and involved as images – in fact the effects of individual gestures and their intensity are magnified at this concentrated scale.

Martin's dense layering and over-painting does not preclude the abundance of internal light experienced in many works here, which are themselves progressions in both luminosity and restraint from the first exhibition of this body of work in London last year. While some of his paintings appear to be in continuous motion and flux, this show also furthers the distinction between passages of flattened ground versus Martin's raised, striated line, highlighting the spatial and temporal rifts present on each surface.

About Jason Martin

Jason Martin's work oscillates between sculpture and painting, incapable of being assigned to a particular medium or movement. Composed with the vigour of action painting but executed by a controlled hand, this dynamism is most visible in early monochromatic paintings where paint was dragged across a variety of surfaces with a fine, comb-like piece of metal or board, creating rhythmic textures suggestive of the ridges in a vinyl record or the grain of feather. In his pure pigment works, vivid colour is applied to moulded panels, whose baroque, velvety contortions appear like an extreme close-up of a painter's palette. These raw, worked surfaces find their equal in Martin's recent paintings, which showcase a painterly return to the more traditional approach of oil on canvas.

Born in 1970 in Jersey, in the Channel Islands, Jason Martin has had solo exhibitions throughout Europe, the United States and Japan including: Schauwerk Sindelfingen Museum, Germany (2016); Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy (2009); Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Malaga, Spain (2008) and Städtische Galerie Nordhorn, Germany (1998). His work is held in numerous international public collections including the Government Art Collection, UK; Denver Art Museum, Colorado, USA; Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, DC; Städtische Galerie Nordhorn, Germany and the Museum of Modern Art, La Spezia, Italy. Martin lives and works between London and Portugal.

About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Today the gallery supports and develops 56 international artists across two exhibition spaces in London and two in New York. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, Lisson Gallery pioneered the early careers of important Minimal and Conceptual artists, such as Art & Language, Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Donald Judd, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long and Robert Ryman among many others. In its second decade the gallery introduced significant British sculptors, including Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon, Anish Kapoor, Shirazeh Houshiary and Julian Opie, to the public for the first time. In addition to a number of renowned artist estates, including Roy Colmer, the Leon Polk Smith Foundation and the John Latham Foundation, the gallery represents leading international artists such as Marina Abramović, Ai Weiwei, John Akomfrah, Susan Hiller and Tatsuo Miyajima. It is also responsible for raising the international profile of a younger generation of artists led by Cory Arcangel, Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Ryan Gander, Haroon Mirza, Laure Prouvost, Pedro Reyes and Wael Shawky.

For press enquiries, please contact

Shawna Gallancy, SUTTON
Tel: +1 212 202 3402
Email: Shawna@suttonpr.com

Mackie Healy, Lisson Gallery
Tel: +1 212 505 6431
Email: mackie@lissongallery.com

i: [@lisson_gallery](https://www.instagram.com/lisson_gallery)
t: [@Lisson_Gallery](https://www.facebook.com/Lisson_Gallery)
fb: LissonGallery