
Philipp von Rosen Galerie

Martin Gerwers

THERE

Opening: April 8, 2016, at 7 pm

Exhibition from April 9 through May 28, 2016

We are proud to inaugurate on April 8, 2016 with *THERE* our first exhibition with works by Martin Gerwers (born 1963 in Velen, lives and works in Düsseldorf). Gerwers is well known to the Rhineland. Lately, he had an extensive single-exhibition, *Motion*, in the Leopold-Hoesch-Museum in Düren (2015). His last exhibition in Cologne, however, was 16 years ago and thus we are particularly happy to show him during Art Cologne.

In *THERE* we exhibit works that are situated between the genres of painting, sculpture and relief, and Martin Gerwers examines the relationship of color and space. The many perspectives of Gerwers' extensive paintings can only be fully experienced if the viewer actively moves around the multicolored objects. Thus – depending on the viewer's position – a variety of visual impressions arises.

Gerwers worked with concrete spatial references already in *Motion* where he placed colored pylons, respectively columns on triangular ground in the main hall of the museum. They had been created for this very site in a way that – similar to stalagmites and stalactites – they extended very long, ended in very small, acute angles and – and this is what we want to emphasize – defined a space "in between", because the pikes of the facing objects did not touch each other. Similarly to this, Gerwers created for *THERE* with the two pending pylons and the two standing pylons site-specific works. And also these pylons define an "in-between", the (seemingly) nothingness that hovers between the pikes of the objects and the ceiling respectively ground. As a viewer, if one aims to situate a pike pointing to the ground, one gradually understands that this is not possible. The more we fix our gaze on the pike, the closer we get to it, the less it can be defined in space. In the same time, the pylons give rhythm to the gallery's space, like human beings or trees, as if they had been placed randomly, but – on the other side – also as if they were part of a group of elements that communicate with each other. This aspect is even more obvious once we take a look at the colors of these objects. Because the pylons have been installed in a way that they form a square and thus a plaza. While the colors on the inside of this plaza are muted or (at least) clear – we talk about three different tones of yellow, three greys, one rose, one muted brown – the colors on the outside are strong and intense. Plus: the pylons have been placed in a way that mostly two sides and thus two colors are visible. And the contrasts and relations of the planes, the smoothness and perfection of the way the color had been applied, transfer each object in space to something that seems to be a two-dimensional, flat thing. As a consequence, we experience a continuous alternation of a spatial impression, the perception of a body in a space (and that means: the body of the sculpture as well as our own, moving body) and the (seemingly) flat painting, that creates through the employed colors a high tension, a visual vibration.

While the pylons carry this alternation to its extreme, the works that are installed at the wall do in particular demonstrate that we are not able at all to discern or define such a relief in a jiffy. Each movement of the viewer around such an object leads necessarily and with magnificent effects of surprise to at times even total changes. For in-

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stance, the work *This One* seems to be – seen from the frontal view – almost ethereal and delicate, because we mainly see a very light blue. However, only a small movement to the left reveals a strong, cold and intense blue that contrasts with a strong ochre and both contrast with the light blue. But when we move to the right, a pale rose and a black become visible, they form wedges in the light blue. And: we cannot and need not only speak about changes of colors, but also of spatial impressions: the forms of the work change radically with each movement. The frontal view shows an almost flat painting-like object, only structured by very light lines. Seen from the left side, the form looks as if it was a snail moving back into its shell. And seen from the right side, it looks as if it was – to stick to the biological metaphor – an open mussel.

All these aspects can be laboriously expressed with metaphors and still we will not be able to fully describe our esthetic impression. Thus, we need to admit with Ludwig Wittgenstein that "one must remain silent" "about what one can not speak".

For further information and / or images please contact the gallery.