

BARTHA CONTEMPORARY

Stephan Baumkötter

May 9 – June 28 2014

Private View Thursday May 8th, 6.30 – 8.30 PM

Bartha Contemporary is delighted to announce the Cologne based painter Stephan Baumkötter's (b.1958) fourth exhibition with the gallery. Recent paintings and works on paper showcase the artist's continued exploration of human perception. Please join us for the private view on Thursday May 8th from 6.30 to 8.30 PM.

Stephan Baumkötter is one of the leading German abstract painters of his generation, working in Cologne and teaching at the University of Arts in Bremen he has been instrumental in establishing a contemporary discourse within a traditional medium.

The paintings shown in this exhibition at first appear monochromatic, slowly revealing a constantly shifting colour space, which both exposes and in turn conceals a wide spectrum of colours. Teetering on the edge of conscious and subconscious awareness, these works continuously engage the viewer and elevate the experience into an ambiguous play between the physical presence and the perception of colour.

Carefully crafted, Baumkötter's paintings tell of the artist's unique ability to modulate a painted surface that at once appear uniform and monochrome but slowly allows the eye to perceive shifts from colour to colour. These changes yield the movement of daylight, as altering light conditions subtly modify the painting's appearance.

Recent works on paper, here set alongside a small selection of paintings on canvas, expand the artist's practice, which includes works on supports such aluminium or porcelain as well an ever increasing body of site-specific wall-drawings. Conceived through a process characterised by a series of predetermined methods of controlled chance, further evolving through mechanisms that underlie the creation of the artist's paintings. Highly pigmented pastel paint-sticks are allowed to roll or fall over the artist's hand. The marks left on the paper are idiosyncratic traces of this process. Set within predetermined parameters that include choice of colour, starting point and positioning, their intimate nature is surprisingly raised by the drawing's enigmatic composition and immense presence.

This exhibition aims to reveal a relationship between paintings on canvas and drawings on paper. Two until now largely independent bodies of work that are developed separately from each other. Here the two genres are for the first time considered in a unique juxtaposition that will re-examine their detached conception.

Coinciding with this exhibition works by Stephan Baumkötter will also be on view as part of two Group-exhibitions in Germany:
#2 Prozess at the Kunstraum Alexander Bürkle in Freiburg (12.5. – 15.6.14)
Notausgang am Horizont, part of Kunstfrühling Bremen (16.5. - 25.5.)