

MARKUS WEGGENMANN – Double Orange vs. Poly Green 30 April – 30 July 2016

taubert contemporary is delighted to announce *Double Orange vs. Poly Green*, a solo exhibition by Markus Weggenmann, opening at the gallery 29 April 2016.

Markus Weggenmann first came to renown with his stripe pictures of the late 1980s. The conceptual constraints and minimal means of this one motif allowed the Zurich-based artist to investigate various aspects of the intensity and scope of color. These parameters were punctuated by the meditative quality of the recurrent, even painterly gesture, the personal ductus of the brushstroke, the subjective choice of color, and the somewhat, antagonistic use of self-mixed distemper, the pigments in which proved intense and strikingly effective.

Around the year 2000 Markus Weggenmann began making paintings on aluminum with high gloss paint used for cars. Also with regard to content he reshuffled the cards, opting for a new formal repertoire that broke radically with the minimalism of his early career. The shift culminated in dense, semi-narrative images sporting supple organic forms in vibrant colors, and in which reduction and concept cede to poetry and sensual opulence. The vague reference to real objects, the flirt with actual content, is a foil to the ostensible non-referentiality of the artist's previous artworks.

In the new show at taubert contemporary Weggenmann presents his latest body of work. Seeking greater individualism, he has probed the tension between intuition and conscious control. The outcome is an astonishingly potent abstraction: variously sized works on canvas that thematically perpetuate the bimorphic idiom of the high gloss paintings yet eschew even a hint of narrative intent.

Space is articulated here by color alone. In this respect, Weggenmann revisits the principle invoked by Karl-Georg Pfahler in 1971: "Color is a value in its own right. Color is quality. Color has its own inherent limits; it exists in and of itself, and in relation to other colors. Color creates space. Color is form and space." The exceptional radiance of the distemper brings a further warm and sensuous dimension to this interaction.

The return to distemper was Weggenmann's most consequential step to date. Spontaneity and latitude are more patent than ever in the artist's latest work – for the medium allows him to translate the decisions reached while painting directly to the canvas. Such immediacy in turn brings to the fore the movement that has always subtly pervaded his work: whether in the act of painting itself, in the floating forms on the media, or in the impact color has on the viewer's sense of space, it makes itself felt at every step.

A large-format work comprised of high gloss stripes, one of a four-part series from 2000, will be on view throughout the exhibition in the gallery office. Its immaculate surfaces are perfectly inscribed in the formal canon of minimalism, to clinical and technoïd effect. Precise, horizontal lines accentuate the exaggerated width of the canvas and emphasize the signal effect of the stripes. Caesura-like, this small, self-contained series marks Weggenmann's transition from the sparse geometry of his early paintings to his current ambient biomorphic work.

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To unambiguously assign Markus Weggenmann's work to a single category is far from easy, for it transcends the limits both of geometric abstraction and biomorphism. It is truer to say that he toys with these categories only then to abandon them again. Yet there is one unfailing constant in his work: color. From the start of his career to the present day, the artist has dealt with color not as a one-dimensional superficial element but rather as a highly charged reactive substance that wraps the viewer in its "atmospheric spatial grasp".

*Markus Weggenmann born 1953 in Singen/Hohentwiel, Germany.
He lives and works in Zurich, Switzerland.*

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