

SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY

**Press Release - May 2015
YVES OPPENHEIM**

SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY is pleased to announce 'heurté, je rebondis' the first solo exhibition at the gallery by Yves Oppenheim (1948, Tananarive, Madagascar; lives and works in Berlin).

In his exhibition at SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY the French artist presents a series of collages, blue ink drawings and two paintings from 2002.

This series of works span over a decade of the artist's investigation around the emotional and evocative qualities of light and colour, developing a visual syntax made of superimposing and juxtaposing colours and shapes. In the 2002 paintings, the artist uses a restrained visual vocabulary. A limited palette of colours comprising different shades of pink, green, red, brown, applied to the canvas with large and quick brushstrokes, creates an embryonic abstract landscape of colour fields and shapes that partly overlap and interweave.

Over the years, this visual language has evolved towards much more complex arrangements, based on incremental layers of colours and intertwined, twisted shapes, together creating a dynamic that now and then expands beyond the canvas and onto the wall.

The collages are the result of a long transformative process, for which the artist makes use of countless paper cut-outs of previous drawings, their shapes inspired by the curvy and floating motifs of Japanese prints. The colour-intensive shapes are carefully organized on many levels, resulting in dynamic and vibrant compositions.

As the artist himself states, his interest in construction - in an almost architectural sense - can be connected with the works of the eighteenth century engraver and architect Giovanni Battista Piranesi. In his oeuvre, Piranesi explores the possibilities of perspective and spatial illusion, employing strong contrasts of lights and shadows, angular perspectives, structured compositions of natural and architectural elements, empirical reality and fantasy, to convey dynamic and labyrinthine images in which real and mental spaces blend and influence each other.

In Oppenheim's series of blue ink drawings, outlines of undisclosed figures come to the surface from a wild tangle of signs and gestures. The subject of these works seems to be the construction and deconstruction of the image: it takes shape without ever unfolding or revealing itself completely. The forms seem to burst through the physical limits of the surface and turn into mass and volumes. They evoke a landscape, an object, a face, a human body, familiar images emerging from our collective and personal memories.

The works by Yves Oppenheim attempt to grasp the endlessly changing and yet unknown texture of the world. Colour, light, and shapes powerfully vibrate, resonate, and bounce in all directions. Winding shapes overlap, intersect and create a fluid space that the beholder is invited to question, peel off, layer after layer, and explore. The two-dimensional surface of the artwork turns into a threshold that we are invited to cross. The artist himself refers to his works as a jungle where one has to part lianas and branches through an infinite space, in search of the light that comes from the rear.

From the pictorial two-dimensional plane a mental and emotional space opens up, deep and multi-faceted, a space that does not provide a representation of the world, but rather amounts to a collection of sensations, memories, echoes from the history of painting, stratified and sedimented.

Text: Francesca Boenzi

For the exhibition 'Yves Oppenheim - heurté, je rebondis' SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY wishes to thank Max Hetzler Gallery for their collaboration.

The opening is on Thursday, 28 May 2015, from 6 to 8 pm.
The exhibition will be on show from May 29 to June 27 2015.

For further information, please contact us at:
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