

# LARS BOHMAN GALLERY

## Donald Baechler, New Works, May 14 – June 19 2011

In Donald Baechler's choice of subjects, he follows a strict repertoire, returning repeatedly to specific motifs depicting them in different techniques. The cast of characters, which also includes himself, comes from every source imaginable and the artistic process includes overprinting, canceling, adding, subtracting, editing until the final work emerges.

*One reason I build my surfaces up is because I don't really want to know what the line is going to do. I want this built-in fracture; when I drag the brush along the canvas I don't want it to be a smooth, easy voyage. - I want some problems along the way.*

Baechler's work is a combination of the childlike and the archaic. Timelessness and a stoic expression are combined with the playfulness of the readymade. It can be placed between the tactile presence and the formal abstraction. He depicts things we all know from our everyday life. The trees, plants, ice cream cones and balls are often in an odd scale, which gives them no clear space to exist in. They are often reduced to an outline or a shadow of the original form.

Besides line and form Baechler's main focuses are surface, texture and spatial dimension. The sculptures are never full out three-dimensional and the paintings and drawings are never full out two-dimensional. Every work is somewhere in between. Baechler gradually adds a third dimension to the canvas by adding pieces of fabric or paper and step-by-step, through the raised surface a sculpture arises. The sculptures in turn reminiscences the two-dimensional works through their complex, patchwork-like surface, muted coloring and the lack of volume.

Donald Baechler is constantly reinventing his techniques and he is continuously starting from scratch. Like the Dadaists and the Modernists before him he tries to forget everything he learned at art school. He's trying to relearn and get close to the direct and somewhat childish vocabulary of lines and shapes. For Baechler it's less about the invention and more about the process.

*For me, if I know what the painting's going to look like, there's not really any reason to paint it. If I'm not learning something there's no reason to do it.*

Donald Beachler was born in Hartford, New England, USA in 1956. He attended the Maryland Institute of Art in Baltimore and the Cooper Union in New York. After completing his studies at the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main 1979, he moved back to New York where he still lives and works. Baechler had his big breakthrough in connection with the Whitney Biennale in New York 1989. Baechler is widely represented around the world at, among others, Museum of Modern Art, Guggenheim Museum and the Whitney Museum in New York, and the Centre Georges Pompidou and Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris.