

Helmut Dorner

June 27 – September 11, 2009*

The Galerie Nelson-Freeman is pleased to present a new exhibition of the German artist Helmut Dorner. A pupil of Gerhard Richter at the Kunst Akademie of Düsseldorf, Helmut Dorner first exhibited oils on canvas or wood, featuring geometric shapes with often dark colors, in the 1980s. At the beginning of the 1990s the artist began using a new medium which was to revolutionize his work : plexiglas. Continuing to use geometric figures, he played on the effects of transparency, shadows created by the medium, and the quality of more acid colors. Helmut Dorner's works have been exhibited on various occasions in the leading institutions of Europe and the United States, in particular in 2004 at the *Pintura* exhibition : *Herbert Brandl, Helmut Dorner, Adrian Schiess* at the Serralves Museum in Porto, then repeated at the Museum für Neue Kunst in Karlsruhe, and in 2006 at the retrospective *Helmut Dorner : Malerei 1988-2005* at the Kunstmuseum Winterthur in Switzerland.

A painter of abstraction, Helmut Dorner has long challenged existing codes by playing with signs and geometric shapes. For his fourth exhibition at the Galerie Nelson-Freeman, the artist pursues his exploration of the lacquer on plexiglass technique with a new series in which the play of the fragile balance between surface and depth creates a sensual pictorial world. By using a plexiglass plate as a support, the artist plays with space, the effects of transparency, and opacity. It is this dialectic that the painter seeks to reveal by creating links between the support and matter, but also with the wall on which the pictorial shadows are reflected.

For Helmut Dorner this new series is a return to the beginnings of his previous works on plexiglas. He paints with his palette of colors in such a way as to open up a sensorial world made up of light and matter. The colors used by superposing are thus multiplied infinitely. The dark-colored points resembling punctuation marks spread out in space, and their opacity contrasts with the transparency of the support. The angles, lines as well as the contrasts of colors that we find between the shapes create a harmony and continuity not only within the works themselves but also between them. Space is not divided. On the contrary, it is enlarged. For Helmut Dorner the idea is to convey an almost physical emotion, like the memory of a light or a temperature at a precise moment.

On the first floor the space constructed by the paintings on plexiglas is punctuated by the presence of two oils on canvas. These oils act as places to stop, as points of concentration. Rather than projecting themselves into the space of the gallery, like the neighboring works, they absorb the spectator and invite him to harness their energy and lose himself in their density.

The essence of Helmut Dorner's work is a quest for a poetry of painting, a tension, a rhythm between colors and matter that result in feeling. The artist strives to bring painting back to its original aim : direct visual experience that leads to emotion and awakens the senses. Helmut Dorner suggests a visual experience, an experiment based not on chance, but on the infinite movement of thought.

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* The gallery will be closed from August 1st to August 31st included.