

»Stop Over« | group exhibition

Exhibition opening:
Friday, 14 September 2012, 6 pm



Alex De Fluvià / España

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group exhibition

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14 September 2012
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During the
OPEN ART 2012
weekend.
www.openart.biz

Opening speech:
Anna Wondrak, M.A.,
art historian

Exhibition:
15 September 2012 to
03 November 2012

Exhibition venue:
Galerie Filser & Gräf,
Hackenstr. 5,
80331 Munich,

Opening hours:
Tue - Fri 11 am - 7 pm,
Sat 11 am - 4 pm

Stop Over is Filser & Gräf Gallery's celebration of its fifth anniversary for the OPEN ART 2012 weekend. The group exhibition features three international artists: C. Michael Norton (USA), Keiko Kimoto (Japan) and Alex De Fluvià (Spain).

Stop Over symbolises an interim result, an opportunity for the gallery to take stock of the last five successful years – and also a way station for the three artists, all breaking their journey in Munich after coming here from extremely different directions. The works of all three address the relationship between painting as a series of colour planes and the drawn line, adopting varying approaches to do so: the line can divide painted areas into subsections (Norton), serve to delimit and demarcate them (Kimoto) or coalesce with them, dancing over their surface (De Fluvià).

The large-format acrylic paintings of US artist C. Michael Norton (* in USA, lives and works in New York) are reminiscent at first glance of abstract expressionists and artists such as Wassily Kandinsky or Jackson Pollock. Powerfully expressive planes of colour are superimposed or juxtaposed to form brilliant contrasts. Lines and grids emerge, dividing the canvas into vertical areas and striving to tame and contain the explosions of colour. The paintings appear to be in constant motion, reflecting the progress of the artist's process of creation in which ten or more layers of colour may be applied to the canvas, built up and removed to create the image. Norton prefers the richer, glowing intensity of dense pigments.

A key focus of the artist's work is the production of a visual rendition of processes from the fields of music and architecture. Eschewing paintbrushes in favour of a palette knife, he takes organic forms and architectural planes as a basis on which to "build" images on the canvas, deliberately interspersed with empty spaces like musical rests. His works thus take on a rhythm allied to that of musical scores; in the same way that a composer arranges and orders sounds and notes, Norton arranges his paints on the canvas and brings it to a mighty, explosive crescendo. "Listening to my work is the first step towards seeing it".

Japanese artist Keiko Kimoto (*1977 in Kyoto, Japan, lives and works in Berlin) has contributed several new works in ink to the exhibition, in which she combines graphic and painted elements. All visual components are presented in simple outlines, their abstraction only developing a concrete subject when viewed as a whole. Their forms are determined by intimated outlines that give an inkling of the subject. The majority of Kimoto's works contain direct references to nature, with recurring themes of birds and floral elements that seem to float over their light paper background.

The moments captured in these works appear to depict an unreal landscape, linked to an inner landscape of the soul by the bird as its symbol. The sparse drawings, with an abstract planarity which Keiko Kimoto uses as a basis to develop figurative moments, present enthrallingly clear graphic lines that blend delicacy and power and are countered by broad, glowing areas of colour. The contrast of black and white increasingly dominates many of Kimoto's more recent large-format drawings, appearing almost to burst out of the strict boundaries of their paper background and galvanising the works into additional dynamism.

The work of Spanish artist Alex De Fluvià (*1966 in Barcelona, Spain, lives and works in Barcelona) combines cultural influences from his extensive travels with his south-west European roots.

De Fluvià layers and overlays collage-like sections taken from newspapers with expressive, densely applied bands of colour and filigree black lines to form a complex web of dynamic energy. Rows of uniform points of colour are repeated to bring rhythm to the works. Large-scale areas of filigree black lines reference the art of calligraphy that Alex De Fluvià studied in depth in Japan; but during travels in North and Latin America, Africa and Asia, he also explored a variety of ways of incorporating arabesques – stylised, intricately intertwining floral motifs – into his work. By combining these ancient ornamental elements with newspaper sequences from the present and overpainting them with graffiti-style layers, he combines and superimposes old and new, translating tradition with a contemporary signature.

Anna Wondrak, M.A.,
Art historian and curator