

Flora Klein
28.10. - 22.12.2016

For her first gallery exhibition in Germany, Flora Klein presents a set of seven new abstract paintings on canvas.

Klein's works vary in appearance and range from large to small formats. Her canvases, executed mainly in acrylic, are initially primed in either light or dark tones and are worked up from the ground through a process of layering. Some paintings remain sparse in their application of colour, whilst others develop into dense compositions through a build up of multiple layers. Sometimes repeatedly overworked, the painted image can become reduced to mere surface. Colour fields and strap-like forms of varying intensity tend to constitute the work's principal formal ingredients.

In the gallery's street-side entrance *Untitled*, 2016, and *Untitled (orange)*, 2016, are presented alongside one another. These works, the smallest in the exhibition, share their dimensions with another painting, *Not yet titled*, 2016, which hangs in the gallery's rear office. At once architectural and organic, a dense build up of paint provides these two works' surfaces with impastos of dull browns, burgundy reds and light greys; both punctuated with the presence of a caustic turquoise. Adjacent is the androgynously titled *Lee*, 2016, which is structured around two fundamental layers: A washed out, primary base consisting of rudimentary, rainbow-like forms which arch across the image space. The second, a network of arms, braces and fields sits atop.

The orderly placement of the paintings around the walls of Galerie Max Mayer's 'C' shaped gallery is interrupted by a measured pause—the space's leading corridor left decidedly bare, ostensibly clustering the works into two possible sets.

Visually comparable to a blemished skin, the surface-heavy arrangement of *Untitled*, 2016, is somewhat at odds with other paintings in the exhibition. Previous re-workings and erasures reveal themselves through a coating of tightly woven, short brush marks, producing a measurable shift in speed. Central to the exhibition is *The Sex*, 2016. Its sinewed net of orange browns, night blues and magentas elicit something of a biological nature, whilst opposing the erotic connotations of its title. The adjacent *Untitled (pink)*, 2016, carrying through a tacit anatomical theme, faces out of the gallery away from the other works. Its coarse, crude palette of 'piggy' pinks and browns offer something notably unsavoury.

Klein's recent exhibition *My Eyes* at the Berlin project space Oracle, comprised of three large format works of the same dimensions, displayed in both vertical and horizontal orientations. In various ways, iodine-coloured bands and divisions criss-crossed the surfaces of each canvas. These divisions provided the works with a common ingredient—each painting bearing its own nuanced usage of the particular iodine-orange colour. What the paintings

Galerie Max Mayer

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shared, in turn, pronounced a sense of difference. A sense of simultaneity—that of unity and discordance—prevailed.

Here at Galerie Max Mayer, recurring formal motifs again repeat themselves, bouncing from one canvas to another, whilst shifts in implied scale and depth become unsettling. Klein's works collectively come together as a dissonant assortment of appearances, whilst oppositions such as micro/macro, male/female, inside/outside, are brought alongside one another and offered back to the viewer as a singularity. Whilst toying with the potential for representation—to which tilting here plays a fundamental role—Klein appears to be negotiating various binaries, albeit in an open, discursive and potentially manipulative way.