

Ocula: 'Mark Hagen A Parliament of Some Things at Almine Rech Gallery, London', October, 2014

OCULA





**Mark Hagen *A Parliament of Some Things* at Almine Rech Gallery, London
13 October 2014 - 08 November 2014**

Almine Rech Gallery London is pleased to present Los Angeles-based artist Mark Hagen's third solo exhibition with the gallery and the artist's first solo show in the United Kingdom. Entitled *A Parliament of Some Things*, the exhibition comprises entirely new paintings and sculptures.

Mark Hagen's paintings are made by pushing black and white paint through lengths of rough burlap onto glass planes supporting sheets of wrinkled wrapping plastic, lengths of packing tape, geometric configurations of cut tile, etc. Once the paint dries, the fabric is pulled from this textured surface, taking its negative imprint on what will be its facing side. This is only a cursory overview of the process, but no matter how assiduously it is explained, it will remain baffling, and this is because these works, which we see frontally as all paintings are seen, were literally composed backwards. The artist can only predict the result to an extent—although increasingly more so over time—and this element of uncertainty is carried over to the beholder. From the point of reception, every visual effect is likewise subject to reversal, as if drawn through the hard shell of the skull, the moist folds of the brain, the charged chute of the optical nerve. To relate to vision in this embodied way is implicitly to divorce it from the phenomenal world. In other words, that which is blind in Hagen's process is also blinding, although it has everything to do with how we actually see, with how much or little, based on our physical and mental predisposition.

The gradient schemes that he favors are produced from just two tubes of paint, yet between them generate infinite variations of gray, distinct colors that cannot be told apart, that inevitably sink into the continuous experiential wash. The radiant, prismatic frames of anodized titanium that enclose this latest series of works might at first appear to supplement this experiential lack, but in actuality only serves to further expose it. As physics stands to remind us, the chromatic richness we make out there corresponds to only a minute fraction of the entire electromagnetic spectrum, and those colors included in that narrow bandwidth are then further reduced to the ones we can name. Between all color and no color, the plenitude and the void, these paintings foreground our sensory limits to suggest what exceeds them.

Hagen's paintings integrate elements of sculpture, and the same is true vice-versa. The paintings are determined as such because they hang on a wall, and the sculptures, in turn, because they stand on the floor, but both are essentially planes loaded with a mixture of visual information and material form—a kind of bas-relief. Earlier freestanding works were pieced together like masonry walls from small brick-like units of found supermarket packaging cast in concrete. These newer ones are instead cut from 4 x 8 foot sheets of honeycomb aluminum into irregularly gridded shapes with interlocking edges along which they may be rotated this way and that. Somewhat like prehistoric monuments subjected to a cubist spin, they boast a greater dimensionality, but one derived from a flatter source, and imminently collapsible back into it. As a finishing touch, these constructs are clad in thin sheets of anodized titanium, which endow them with the same shimmering rainbow effect as the aforementioned frames and thereby reinforce their painterly aspect. In this way, materials, tools and techniques are passed between a range of formats—painting and sculpture, but also product design and architecture—establishing a legible continuity between one work and the next, as well as between art and the world outside it.

Mark Hagen was born in Black Swamp, Virginia, and received his MFA from California Institute of the Arts in 2002. Recent group exhibitions include *Painting in Place* by LAND (Los Angeles Nomadic Division, 2013); *Handful of Dust*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Santa Barbara (2013); *Made in L.A.*, L.A. Biennial, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2012); *TC: Temporary Contemporary*, Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach (2012); *Lost Line: Contemporary Art from the Collection*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2012); and California Biennial (2008), Orange County Museum of Art. Recent solo exhibitions include *Guest Star*, Marlborough Chelsea, New York (2014); *Paleo Diet*, China Art Objects Galleries, Los Angeles (2013); and *Black Swamp*, Almine Rech Gallery, Brussels, Belgium (2013). Hagen's artist book *2013?: A Doomsday Day Planner* was published in 2012. Public collections include LACMA and the Hammer Museum. He lives and works in Los Angeles, California.

Almine Rech Gallery will also be featuring a solo presentation of new works by Mark Hagen at their Frieze London booth.

Courtesy of the Artist and Almine Rech Gallery
Photos: Alex Delfanne Close

Almine Rech Gallery

London, United Kingdom

Address / Contact / Hours

11 Saville Row
Mayfair
London W1S3PG
United Kingdom
Tel: +33 (0)1 45 83 71 90

Tuesday - Saturday: 10am - 6pm

Selected Works



View Artwork

Mark Hagen *A Parliament of Some Things (Additive and...*



View Artwork

Mark Hagen *To Be Titled (Additive Sculpture, Cement Screen...*



View Artwork

Mark Hagen *Delicious, Atrocious Experiments*



View Artwork

Mark Hagen *The Laboratories Inside Us*



View Artwork

Mark Hagen *Berberia*



View Artwork

Mark Hagen *We Have Never Been Modern*



View Artwork

Mark Hagen
*Dilutants and
Mannerists*



View Artwork

Mark Hagen
*Delicately Woven
Shuttle*



View Artwork

Mark Hagen
*Candles After
Lightbulbs*



View Artwork

Mark Hagen
Younger Dryas