ALMINE RECH

John M Armleder
Quasi Nocturne

Sep 24 — Nov 23, 2024 | Monaco

Almine Rech Monaco is pleased to announce *Quasi Nocturne,* John M Armleder's fifth solo exhibition, on view from September 24 to November 23, 2024.

John M. Armleder's *Quasi Nocturne*, the artist's fifth show at Almine Rech, presents a new group of "Pour paintings" in the company of a furniture sculpture, a puddle painting and a glass mosaic. Encouraging connections (and reflections) that transcend materiality, style and modes of production, the exhibition is a continuation of the artist's on-going endeavor to confound categories (what makes an artwork a painting instead of a sculpture?) and confuse distinctions (what do we consider fine art vs. decoration?).

The core of the exhibition is a dozen recent medium-format "Pour paintings." Characterized by colorful flows and drips that overlap and mix directly on the canvas, these paintings illustrate Armleder's interest in challenging authorial intent with acts of serendipity. Avoiding the brush (an extension of the proverbial "artist's hand"), he instead encourages viscous liquid materials to do what they will on the surface of the canvas—drip, splatter, mix, repel, congeal, absorb, and so on. If this process recalls Helen Frankenthaler's soak-stain technique, Armleder's execution is intentionally less controlled. Thicker pours result in energetic compositions characterized by clashing colors and rough, uneven textures. Unlike Frankenthaler's stains, Armleder's opaque paints (into which he often mixes other materials, like glitter) build up into a kind of strata. Instead of creating an illusion of (or an allusion to) landscape, the "Pour paintings" are themselves topographical and haptic; each one a microcosmic environment begging to be visually wandered and explored. *Capri*, 2008, a "Puddle painting" whose encrusted surface features sea shells, starfish and sand suggests a link between abstraction and the coastal lanscape surrounding the gallery.

Shifting the frame of reference from landscape to interior design, *Photomap (furniture sculpture),* 2019, presents two tightly controlled geometric abstractions hung above a mirrored *Barber Osgerby* sideboard. If the Minimalist compositions featuring silver squares in each corner of the otherwise blank canvas and sleek Modern furniture seem particularly well-suited to the white-cube, sky-lit setting of the gallery, this "Furniture sculpture" also provides a stark aesthetic contrast to the colorful and freeform "Puddle" and "Pour" paintings. And yet, the fact that the "Puddle" and "Pour" paintings are reflected in the pristine mirrored surface of *Photomap (furniture sculpture)* makes it impossible to fully distinguish these bodies of work within the context of the exhibition. Emphasizing the interconnectedness of the artist's oeuvre, *Quasi Nocturne* encourages the viewer to look from different perspectives in order to eventually see more similarities than differences. Throughout the exhibition, literal and figurative reflections as well as colorful filters—as exemplified by the transparent glass mosaic, *Dense clouds*, 2024—confirm that there are multiple angles and attitudes from which to consider any and all of the works on view.

- Mara Hoberman