ALMINE RECH

Per Kirkeby
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Mar 3 — Apr 14, 2018 | Paris

Almine Rech Gallery Paris is pleased to present the first exhibition by Danish artist Per Kirkeby with the gallery, featuring a selection of paintings and bronze sculptures. This monographic exhibition follows ‚Brick Sculpture (1966-2016)', the artist's recent solo show at Palais des Beaux-Arts, Paris (October-December 2017).

"Kirkeby emphasizes the color of the material that changes with the light and the power of colors to generate emotions. In works such as Urwald from 1988 he sets colors as accents like light as an expression of chaos, for it is only out of chaos that form can "emerge". A form defined by color and texture that in Untitled from 1999, with yellow-green against blue, olive and brown, characterizes the brutal forces of metamorphosis. The landscape, the stone, rock, and ice formations become as a process a battlefield of time and change of our life world. Over the past two decades Kirkeby has created new materialities from new coincidences and nuclei of crystallization, in part with strong colors in the struggle between brushstrokes and gestures. [...] Kirkeby already translated the haptic texture of the paintings as a line of demarcation to their surroundings into the three-dimensional during the 1980s in sculptures [...]. The traces of the artist's treatment conjure a bark-like surface that due to the bronze used evoke petrified trees and geological epochs long past. The stump-like fragmented forms refer, just like a series of his brick sculptures, to a beauty discussed as the aesthetics of ruins. [...] Both ruinosity as well as the ruin as signs of metamorphosis, time, and memory are taken up by Kirkeby in his works. The artist always has in mind the lines separating the materials, lines of demarcation and their dynamic change during the process of transformation. Textures and colors here define the merely temporary borders between the materials and their forms and structures. In so doing, Kirkeby's nature-like forms crystallize with various textures out of chance and chaos. Kirkeby negotiates between abstraction, time, and memory, whereby he imitates the form of natural creation with the eye of a geologist viewing epic time spans and under the paradigm that everything passes." *

Per Kirkeby (born in 1938 in Copenhagen) is one of the most important painters of his generation. His first exhibition coincided with the completion of his studies in geology, in 1964. Kirkeby represented Denmark in the 1976 Venice Biennale and later participated in documenta VII (1982) and documenta IX (1992). Important solo museum exhibitions include Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; Kunsthalle Bern; Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek and BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels. The artist participated in 'A New Spirit in Painting' at the Royal Academy in 1981 and was the subject of a major survey exhibition at the Tate Modern in 2009. A retrospective of painting and sculpture was organised by The Phillips Collection, Washington DC, in 2012. Works by Kirkeby are found in many museum collections including the Tate, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and Museum of Modern Art, New York, among many others.

Translated from German by Brian Currid.

* *Excerpt from 'Per Kirkeby: All Is Remembered' by Dieter Buchhart, an essay to be published in the exhibition catalogue.*

In cooperation with Michael Werner Gallery