

Stanley Whitney
Homeing II: Paintings

Galerie Nordenhake presents the fifth solo exhibition by the artist Stanley Whitney (Philadelphia, USA, 1946) and his first in Mexico City. Whitney's work is inspired by a broad cultural and historical spectrum of references, ranging from color as the subject of the painting, Roman architecture, the American quilting tradition, and jazz. Filtered by his intuition, this mix of correspondences encapsulates the infinite possibility that exists in the brushstrokes of the geometric motifs of his work.

Stanley Whitney progressively went through a period of self-definition, which concentrated his efforts on the study of the compositional elements of his pictorial practice. In the seventies he settled in New York, where he dialogued with key figures of previous generations such as Philip Guston, Robert Rauschenberg, Brice Marden and also with contemporaneous painters such as Ed Clark or McArthur Binion. In addition to referring explicitly in his titles to the history of art or jazz; sometimes, the grids of his pieces allude to prisoners schematized inside bars. His life and work have always been flooded with the social conscience of historical civil right movements.

Since the eighties the artist divides his time between New York and Italy. As a result, some architectures -such as the Colosseum in Rome- have permeated his practice, and are useful to understand within his work how geometric bodies are linked to each other. Similarly, music intervenes in his painting. The repetitions and rigorous compositions recall the parallelism of musical staves, where colors act as notes on scores. Specifically, the improvisational encounters in jazz describe the confluence between one color and another in his painting, just as one musical instrument responds to another in jazz improvisation.

The colorful freehand grids highlight the flatness of the surface. The integration of figures through superimpositions blurs spatial distinctions, whereby the forms seem to emerge and immerse themselves in surrounding colors. These color fields of mixed oil and pigment create clearly geometric tensions, where the background and foreground of the painting are one and the same. Whitney's rhythmic repetitions provide balance to the eye, which travels through the patterns in search of infinite small differences.