

‘Paper, Scissors, Stone’ brings together the work of eight international artists who share an artistic language primarily interested in painting, without necessarily integrating it as a medium or a tool. In this way, the artists offer a model that eludes the incessantly returning discussion about the relevance of painting without doing away with the significance of painterly concerns.

The title for the exhibition is borrowed from the English’s name of one of the most popular games played using only the hand. Invented in Japan as Jan-ken-pon in the late 19th century, the game is often used as a selection method, but, unlike truly random selections, it can be played with skill, as a player can recognize and exploit the non-random behavior of an opponent. This reflects on the elusiveness of the artistic process, its anti-hierarchical patterns, but also implies some confrontational tension and a kind of shifting equality of values in the diverse media.

This group of artists investigates painting's contemporary potentials by taking up specific discourse from previous decades, so pinpointing the historical conditions of each medium and the associated ideological approaches. The inclusion of Ree Morton and Ray Johnson reflects an attempt to historicise the positions of a younger generation of artists, and is not simply for the sake of revivalism. Rather, the strength of such reflection is that, from a distance, key works of the past can shed new light on contemporary attitudes towards abstract painting.

‘Paper, Scissors, Stone’ can be seen as an attempt to offer manifold examples of abstraction’s inventive potential and will suggest varied reasons why it remains vital and essential to the contemporary critical debate.

Taubä Auerbach, born in 1981, recently relocated to New York from San Francisco. She is currently exhibiting in the inaugural exhibition of Barbara Gladstone Gallery in Brussels, curated by Francesco Bonami. In February 2009 she will be presented in a solo show at MoMA New York.

Kerstin Brätsch was born in Hamburg in 1976. In February 2009 she will be included in a group show curated by Massimiliano Gioni at the New Museum in New York.

Knut Henrik Henriksen was born in 1970 in Oslo and is currently Berlin-based. Simultaneous to Paper Scissors Stone he is exhibiting in a two-person show with Hans Arp at Galerie Würth in Hagan, Norway.

Ray Johnson (1927- 1995) was a seminal figure of the Pop Art movement. Somewhat of a cult figure, little is known of his life and the circumstances of his death. In 2002 an award-winning

documentary produced by John Malkovich was made on Johnson's life and work including interviews with his friends and fellow artists such as Chuck Close, Roy Lichtenstein, James Rosenquist, and Jeanne-Claude and Christo. Johnson's work is currently included in Looking at Music, MoMA, New York

Ree Morton (1936-1977) died while still young and in her prime. Surviving her is the product of seven years of artistic activity. The significance of her influence has been reflected in exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art (1974) and the Guggenheim Museum, New York (1985). A major retrospective of her work opens at the Generali Foundation in Vienna in December.

Scott Olson is based in Ohio and was born in 1976. He recently presented solo exhibitions at Overduin and Kite in Los Angeles and Taxter and Spengemann in New York.

R.H. Quaytman was born in 1961. Based in New York, she was founder and director of the artist-run space Orchard in New York. She has an upcoming solo show at Vilma Gold in London and Miguel Abreu in New York in December this year.

Florian Schmidt was born 1980 and lives and works in Vienna. This year he has exhibited with a solo shows at New Galerie de France in Paris and Andreas Huber in Vienna.

Gyonata Bonvicini was born in 1972, in Milan, Italy. He has worked as a freelance curator based in London and is currently the director of Galerie Nordenhake, Berlin. In 2007 he won the international award for Young Curator at Marco Vigo.

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