

For Scott Olson's second solo exhibition at the gallery he presents a new body of work in which his focus has moved from the broader strips of matt paint and open forms to a more fractal, sometimes varnished aesthetic.

One perhaps associates abstract painting with large canvases but Olson's complex and layered arrangements of colours and shapes are often not much larger than a sheet of writing paper. They are composed on his tabletop through a process of dripping, pushing, drawing, dabbing, combing and masking, using a variety of hand-made tools. In his idiosyncratic method he combines the contradictory approaches of careful arrangement and gesture.

Olson is an artisan in the traditional sense. And while his studio is not a laboratory, he experiments, surrounded by bubbling pots and jars of pigments found in France. He combines disparate pictorial elements and gestures on the surfaces on which he paints in an alchemic process in which the results vary from luminescence to translucence. When painting on wood Olson often grounds using his own hand-made gesso, the crisp glittering white material also functioning at times as a visual frame or platform for the central motif. In other works he frames using strips of wood which themselves become part of the overall motif.

The art historical associations Olson's paintings can suggest, from Klee to early Ben Nicholson, from Braque to Kandinsky..., are incidental. The relation emerges from an authentic interest in the history of colours, techniques and tools – the origins of certain pigments, the production of marble dust and rabbit skin glue, the construction of a comb. Rather than subscribing to a particular tradition within the history of painting, Olson is a traditionalist in terms of the process of painting.

Born in 1976 and based in Ohio, Scott Olson has exhibited in solo exhibitions at Taxter and Spengemann, New York, and Overduin and Kite, Los Angeles. Olson has been included in group exhibitions and performances at Misako + Rosen, Tokyo, Japan, Galleria Massimo de Carlo, Milan, Italy, Chelsea Art Museum, New York (curated by Pati Hertling), Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York (2009), Center for Contemporary Art, Kitakyushu, Japan; Museum fuer angewandte Kunst, Vienna, Austria; Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, Buffalo. He also produced an audio CD, Liam Gillick Meets Scott Olson in Japan on the Whatness label in 2002.

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