

Capitain Petzel

Maria Brunner

Acqua Felice

28 February – 12 April 2025

Capitain Petzel is pleased to announce Maria Brunner's solo exhibition *Acqua Felice*, opening on February 28, 2025.

The exhibition's title, *Acqua Felice*, references the historic Roman aqueduct, which once transformed the city's water supply, echoing Maria Brunner's engagement with flow and movement. The artist previously worked in a hyper-realistic mode, a process that ultimately became an act of constraint, a self-imposed discipline that led to a rupture. The new body of work in the exhibition marks a return to fundamentals – gesture, material, surface – making a connection to her early drawings. While traces of realism remain, such as a reference to the self-portrait of the famous physicist Ernst Mach from his own perspective in the painting *ALLES WALZER, DEIN ERNST*, they recede into something more elusive, a fragmented presence.

Maria Brunner's new body of work unfolds as a meditation on her process. The artist has constructed a space, in which her work is neither confined to the canvas, nor bound to defined representation. The lines painted on the walls of the gallery are to be seen as extensions of the architecture, framing the works and guiding the viewer fluidly through the space.

The gesture of the painted line, both deliberate and instinctual, functions not only as a visual element but as a material inquiry. It is a fine disruptor, altering and simultaneously making the viewer aware of the space it occupies. This exploration of perception has been a continuous thread in Brunner's practice, recalling the sensibility of her earlier works. In previous series, such as her paintings of folds in fabric, reflections, or light-dappled surfaces, she scrupulously examined the materiality of her subjects. *Acqua Felice* extends this inquiry by stripping the image down to its essence.

The monochrome paintings are executed in Payne's grey, the sole pigment used in these works. The pigment was developed in the late 18th century by William Payne, initially as a muted alternative to black, often used in watercolor painting for its subtle atmospheric depth. Its fluid, shifting tonality makes it a fitting medium for Brunner's exploration of painting, where forms shift between recognition and dissolution.

Maria Brunner (born 1962 in Lienz, Austria, lives and works in Berlin) has held institutional solo exhibitions at Kunstverein Offenburg, Kunst Forum Rottweil and Kunstverein Heilbronn, among others. She participated in group exhibitions at Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck, and Museum der Moderne, Salzburg. The artist has been represented by Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne, since 1992.

Maria Brunner's works are included in the public collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Sammlung Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt, and Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck.