

*Imprints of a No. 50 Paintbrush Repeated at Regular Intervals of 30 cm” is the title Niele Toroni gives to every one of his works. In this way, he laconically describes precisely what he does: place a regular pattern of brush imprints onto various surfaces – canvas, paper, glass, the wall – working with primary colours.*

This rule has defined his life's work for 50 years. Looking very carefully, we can see that no one brush imprint is exactly the same as another. But in other respects, too, we discern that the rule permits an astonishingly large number of possible variations. Toroni engages spontaneously with the exhibition spaces and covers large walls as well as out of the way places, where the viewer's glance is never likely to fall.

Since the 1960s, questions have been asked about whether painting is still up-to-date in a world inundated by images, and whether abstract painting has arrived at its inevitable end. Toroni, the painter-philosopher, has found a disarming response – albeit not without an ironic wink. His painting calls to our attention and highlights the beauty of the world that surrounds us, to be achieved only through painting. It is impossible to conceive of 20th century painting without him. On the occasion of the award of the 13th Rubens Prize, Toroni will be showing the surprises his painting holds in store within an exciting sequence of rooms.

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