

Overduin & Co. is pleased to present the first solo exhibition of work by Dutch artist, Daan van Golden, in Los Angeles.

“An emperor commissioned a group of Greek artists, and a group of Chinese artists to make a mural. There was a dividing partition so that neither could see the others’ work of art before it was finished. When the Chinese had finished, their picture was unveiled. And a couple of weeks later the Greeks finished too, and the emperor could also see their work. They had only polished their wall so that it gently mirrored the Chinese painting.”

quotation read by Daan van Golden in a speech given in 1990

“Daan van Golden is a non-conformist in terms of both geography and his art. His work is well-known in the Netherlands, but without being in any way anachronistic, it has developed at the margins of the major international styles. It is indicative that in the Sixties and Seventies the paintings of textile motifs which he did in Japan in 1964 were included in turn in the context of exhibitions devoted to Pop Art, Group Zero and American abstract painting. They could have found their place, as indeed could his later works, in exhibitions devoted to conceptual art, Minimalism or the appropriationism of the Eighties. However, their total independence of these movements is just as evident as their closeness to them.

At the end of the 1950s van Golden as a young man worked on abstract, expressionist painting that demonstrated his interest in American painting, but also in the Cobra movement. During the period he spent in Japan from 1963 to 1964, he discovered almost by chance a method that would determine all of his work up to the present time. He started to reproduce on canvas motifs found on wrapping paper and paper hankies. Over the twenty-four months he spent in Japan, he produced twenty or so paintings using these motifs. They are characterized by grids, floral patterns and organic forms. The meticulous technique used to reproduce them as accurately and neutrally as possible required a lot of time and concentration, but had the advantage of freeing the artist from the need to draw his inspiration from a closed mental and emotional space. From then on van Golden would adhere to that position: observing and finding the subjects of his pictorial practice in his daily experience of the world and art.

Formally, because they bring together major modern forms like the grid and current consumer objects, van Golden’s works are located on the European flank of Pop Art alongside Polke, Richter or Hamilton. In reality, the project that gave rise to them brings them near on the one hand to ‘attitude’ art, upstream close to the work of someone like Yves Klein or the poster artists, and downstream close to conceptual artists like Douglas Huebler or On Kawara.

The works van Golden has been developing since the end of the 1970s – paintings, editions or photographs – carry on with the method started in Japan. Heerenlux (begun in 1993 after a long break in his career) is a series based on a floral motif found on a fabric sample. Depending on the nature of the exhibitions, details of the motif are reproduced at different scales on canvases of varying sizes. In parallel, van Golden isolates a work or a detail from a work – a budgerigar found in the work of Matisse (Blauw Studie naar Matisse), a walker by Giacometti (Studie Giacometti), a drip-painting by Pollock (Studie Pollock) – and reproduces its silhouette in color on a canvas that is otherwise left untouched. Four copies of each painting are produced. A set of works, editions or photographs accompanies this pictorial practice. They form a counterpoint that again reinforces the intimate resonance van Golden constructs between art and existence. At the same time they are the product of a process equivalent to that of the paintings, insofar as they proceed through observation, then through selection, among the flow of images encountered by the artist.”

by Anne Pontégnie

Born in Rotterdam, Daan van Golden (1936 – 2017) lived and worked in The Netherlands. Since the 1960s, numerous solo exhibitions of van Golden’s work have been organized by institutions including the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam, Camden Arts Centre in London, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, the Musée d’Art Moderne et Contemporain in Geneva, Wiels Contemporary Art Centre in Brussels, as well as the Centre d’Art Contemporain in Dijon. Van Golden also represented The Netherlands in the Dutch Pavilion at the 1999 Venice Biennale.

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