



**Francis Baudevin**  
**«Halb Tanz»**  
**April 21 – May 26, 2018**

Francis Baudevin's geometric-abstract works on view at Galerie Mark Müller invite visitors to join in the dance. The exhibition shows the formal language that the artist has been using since the late 1980s and expands it by adding new elements. The two works *Halb Tanz*, for example, refer to the title of the exhibition and at the same time to a creative period of over 30 years in which Baudevin has repeatedly worked with recurring themes. With their dating, the current works reveal the serial character of his artistic practice. They not only refer to repeating motifs in his oeuvre, but explicitly to works that emerged in various color combinations and sizes between 1988 and 1994. Baudevin is here appropriating Baudevin.

The starting point for his works is frequently pharmaceutical packaging removed of all writing, leading to a focus on structure. Or, in other words, by removing the concrete advertising message a move towards geometric abstraction takes place; the concentration on color thus creates new spaces. At the same time, he enlarges the packaging many times over and executes this step masterfully in acrylic paint. The mechanically produced packaging of a mass product becomes a unique piece in Baudevin's work.

Within this strict formal vocabulary, that echoes both applied design and the Zurich concretists, he allows other art historical references to shimmer through. The color combination of *Somebody New Dancing with You*, for example, recalls Vallotton's palette of colors. The diptych *Untitled* opens up an exciting dialogue by bringing together two works. Virtually fluorescent effects are generated in contrast by the two monochromatic works *Halb Tanz*. The two-dimensional surface of the visual support seems to want to step out of the canvas due to the gradual nuances of color.

As mentioned above, *Hommage à l'art islamique* is a new element in Francis Baudevin's formal language. Two black squares with blank centers are slightly shifted and form a star symbol. The geometric figuration seems almost a bit lost on the large quadratic visual support. The longer we engage ourselves in viewing the image, the greater the draw it seems to develop; we almost think we can see the star turning. A picture by Olivier Mosset was the point of departure for this work, according to Baudevin. Baudevin takes Mosset's circular form to the square and thus pays homage to his fellow artist.

In the current exhibition, Francis Baudevin arranges his coded formal vocabulary in a new syntax using an unmistakable typography. Despite the narrow limitations placed on his conceptual way of working, the possibilities within these structures are virtually infinite. Playfully and with an ironic wink, Francis Baudevin's exhibition *Halb Tanz* once again shows the inexhaustible interdependence of colors and shapes.

Barbara Ruf (english translation by Brian Currid)