

John Nixon  
12.1. - 2.3.2019

Australian artist John Nixon opens his current show at Galerie Mark Müller right at the entrance with his 2019 work *Black Monochrome (Ruler)*. On black enamel paint, he places a ruler, a frame corner, and wooden strips that stick out over the canvas edge. In this new work, the artist arranges items that he has with him while traveling and elements that he has found in Zurich and Basel. By locating them in this context, he reacts to his surroundings, with continual development to his work. He arranges the contingency of the objects precisely and clearly. In John Nixon's constructed paintings, various materials, from found wooden slats to aluminum objects from the hardware store, are placed in new relationships to one another.

Nixon's 2017 show at Museum gegenstandsfreier Kunst in Otterndorf, Germany marks the point of departure for the current exhibition; in some ways, the current show can be considered its continuation. As in the German exhibition, he arranges the works on a wall painted in a L-shape. The painting is - *Untitled (Red and White Cross)* - which is the reference for the wall colour, while Nixon places two paintings in the middle on the horizontal. He also places two additional works in the color surface. In so doing, the clear distinction between visual support and wall increasingly dissolves with intense inspection; the picture seems so stretch beyond the canvas.

The paintings and the walls mutually refer to one another, resulting in new dialogues. Over the last two years, wall coloring has increasingly an important addition to presentation of the paintings: for example, in Ottendorf in 2017 or last year at a presentation in London, where the design of the room's colors was a central part of the work. Taking the three primary and three secondary colors as a point of departure, Nixon adds black, white, and silver to his palette. The wall colors allow for new adjacencies and in this way new perspectives on his practice.

In his work, John Nixon uses a clear, geometric form vocabulary, yet one that knows no limits in the choice of its material. He contrasts these strictly defined guidelines with a free approach to the formal elements: color, texture, surface, forms, and volumes are closely linked to the material opening new affinities and references.

Barbara Ruf