

Hans-Jürgen Diehl

projection

17 March - 21 April 2012

Opening 16 March 2012, 6-9pm.

Nina Koidl and Henning Weidemann are pleased to announce the second solo show of Hans-Jürgen Diehl. On display will be multiple new large-format paintings, as well as drawings created over the past several months in New York.

The exhibition's title, *projection*, is related to the method that Hans-Jürgen Diehl employs for the creation of his large-format works. The artist begins each painting by projecting multiple photographs of his onto a primed canvas. He then follows the lines and contours of the projections on the canvas and fills the interstitial and empty spaces with color. In this way, he creates multiple visual layers that are abstract in form but result from the transmission of a depiction.

Hans-Jürgen Diehl distinguishes his painting from non-representational pictorial compositions. For him, abstraction arises from a formal reduction of an image that is representational in origin. The path into abstraction is further supported by the choice of colors. The powerful, complementary signal colors have an overwhelming effect, but permit no associations of any kind to a model. The exhibition title *projection* can thus be interpreted as a questioning of the concept of projection itself, since ultimately no image of reality is projected, nor can the observer have a picture-memory in the psychological sense. The assumption of multiple visual layers causes the works to compress their visual models. The artist is interested in a compaction or transformation, "like a forest turning into coal."

Just as Hans-Jürgen Diehl declines to create a non-representational composition according to the rules of mass, weight, and proportion, his decision to trace shapes largely prevents the emergence of a visual handwriting of his own. He thus distances himself from two possibilities of generating an image. First, he declines to use pre-existing geometric shapes. Second, he declines to use the significance of the gesture to intensify expression. Hans-Jürgen Diehl breaks from these two principles of non-representational painting, and in so doing also questions the artist's control of composition. He removes himself from a central aspect of artistic work—the artist's power over the material.

Diehl's works have been marked in recent years by an ever-stronger compression of visual layers. In contrast to his line and grid structures in prior years, his recent paintings have been more condensed and flattened. At the same time, he has chosen to use the painterly construction of layers to penetrate into visual space, which he connects with the feeling of life in a limitless biotope.

Hans-Jürgen Diehl (born 1940) studied painting at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Munich, the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris and the Hochschule für Bildende Kunst, Berlin. He was professor of painting at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin for over 25 years. Until the early 1990s, Hans-Jürgen Diehl's paintings were largely representational. He focused primarily on subjects from Critical Realism and perspectival photorealism. Works from this phase of his oeuvre have been shown at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Kunsthalle Zürich, and the Berlinische Galerie, among other places, and are currently on display in the exhibition Divided Heaven in the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin. Exhibitions of his more recent works have been held at the Kesselhaus Hannover, Galerie Limmer in Cologne, and the Kunsthaus Potsdam. Public collections that hold his works include the Kupferstichkabinett and the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin, the Sprengel Museum Hannover, the Kunstsammlung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, and the Norddeutsche Landesbank Hannover Collection.

Hans-Jürgen Diehl lives and works in New York and Berlin.

For digital image material and additional information, please contact us by telephone or e-mail:

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