

***ABSTRAKT***

Markus Amm, Gregor Hildebrandt, Wyatt Kahn, Gerold Miller, Katy Moran, Mary Ramsden, David Renggli, Robin Rhode, Jan-Ole Schiemann

**Exhibition:** 28 April – 15 May 2021

Wentrup is pleased to present the group exhibition *ABSTRAKT* during Berlin's Gallery Weekend.

The group exhibition *ABSTRAKT* is featuring nine artists, whose works offer different approaches to abstraction. The formal qualities of abstract artworks are significant not in themselves but as part of the work's expressive message. Artists work by reviving and transforming archetypes from the unconscious of modern culture. Therefore, the most useful questions to ask about contemporary abstraction are: What themes and forms does it retrieve from the tradition of modern art and how have they been changed? The exhibition is combining artists that reflect different styles, materialities and visual vocabulary of abstraction.

Since the late 1990s, **Markus Amm** has been methodically and sensitively exploring how the materials of painting, reduced to their essences, cohere into abstract images. His work can be luminous and illusionistic or bracingly sculptural and physical, and in many cases, it is both of these things simultaneously. Amm is also interested in how the perception of time informs the processes of making art and looking at it, as the processes he uses to produce many of his works require long periods of waiting and looking. The paintings therefore pose questions about how we distinguish between action and reflection.

**Gregor Hildebrandt's** work makes formal reference to Minimalism while engaging primarily with concepts of cross-media transfers of music and poetry into visual art. Hildebrandt's core materials are almost exclusively sound recording media, such as magnetic audio tapes and vinyl records, which he processes, or records he records with specific songs before using them on canvas, in photographic prints, or in expansive installations. For Hildebrandt, sound carrier as an artistic medium, particularly in its original role as a medium for storage, thus fulfilling an important function: it enables the artist to add a further "invisible" dimension to his pictures. Playing with perception in this way is a major characteristic of his work; the picture is completed in the head of the viewer and made visible.

**Wyatt Kahn** is primarily known for his investigations into the visual and spatial relationship between painting and sculpture. Kahn assembles complex wall-mounted works in which the gaps between the individual canvases give rise to abstract or pictorial compositions. Rather than tracing the lines and shapes directly onto the canvas itself, he turns them into physical components of the artwork. Referencing the tradition of minimalist abstraction, Wyatt Kahn's monochrome multi-panel 'paintings' are informed by a desire to explore non-illusory forms of representation. In essence, their subject becomes the interplay between two and three dimensions, as experienced via shifts in surface, structure and depth. In Kahn's work, the wall upon which the work is hung becomes an integral part of the composition. Interested in a painting's potential to function as the very embodiment of the object it depicts, Kahn has also developed works in which the shaped stretchers combine to create the form of an actual object, while a synthesis of hand-drawn motifs and words epitomise its essential qualities.

**Gerold Miller's** artistic practice gravitates around questions of imagery, focussing on the relationship between conceivability and visibility. Between geometric unambiguity and visual ambiguity, and the viewer's active involvement. Major influences come from the Hard Edge painting of the American West Coast, the experiments of the Italian Zero movement, and the Neo Geo movement of the 1980s.

Miller's work shows how the path to non-objective art inevitably leads back to reality. They arise from an irreducible use of form and color and dispense with any possible content. The setting of art as place and present plays a significant role in his entire oeuvre. The artist is concerned with the viewer's perspective on himself in a defined surrounding space and how he locates himself in relation to it. The merging of artwork and viewer becomes an ever-changing process, making the simultaneity of place and time an essential factor. The two red tones of *TO 17* (2020) allow illusionistic depth spaces to emerge from the surface, which is only revealed in the process of perception. At the same time, they create a tension, leading to a static and dynamic interplay. *TO 17* thus acquires not only a strong physical presence but also an extreme immaterial one.

The abstraction of **Katy Moran's** paintings exists in a unique place wherein pictorial allusion and material obduracy find peaceful accord. In each work, Moran's finely tuned techniques conjure scenes that can sometimes be suggestive of landscape, still life or portraiture while exploring colour, composition and gesture. Her titles, similarly, are at times literal, random, and autobiographical, almost moving freely with the gestures in each painting. Certain works have titles relating to their source inspiration, while others are named with spare, intimate, and often playful musings which relate to the imagery that come to light in the work, such as *cloud face* (2019). Recently described as an "abstract painter of figurative mood," Moran enlists a wide scope of mark-making to conjure different atmospheres in each painting. In this latest body of work, every chosen surface is readymade including found framed paintings. She works her own brushstrokes over these supports, sometimes leaving fragments of the original layer to show through, at other times obscuring it entirely.

**Mary Ramsden** creates abstract compositions in which amoebic forms fuse with bold, gestural mark-making. Ramsden's practice is unapologetically painterly. Her works are testament to a commitment to painting as a progressive language that demands our attentive engagement. Strategically refusing referential readings, she makes painted objects whose compositional unity belies the complexity of their making. In Ramsden's work even, the subtlest adjustment is generative. Each shift in palette, variation in scale, or nuance of mark effects an incremental development within a broader scheme of experimentation. A recurring theme in Ramsden's work is a preoccupation with the edge: a concern that is realized formally and pursued methodologically.

**David Renggli's** oeuvre, spanning from sculpture and painting to collage, is a witty engagement with the topics of western society as well as a reflexive exploration of art history. In his large-format series of *I Love You* paintings, paint is applied to the back of glass panels, which leads to a strong luminance. The physical presence of this luminance is stronger than the rational mind. Here, the artist's concern is to reveal the discrepancy between an intellectual discourse and the claims made of modern art on the one hand, and a physical truth that is determined by beauty on the other. In addition to showing this, Renggli is also interested in honesty and redundancy. This is also how the title of this series is to be understood: while the phrase "I love you" is used in an inflationary manner by a majority of people, and thus loses significance, when it is meant honestly, it is the untouchable very essence of what is beautiful, true, and good. In this way, Renggli applies the principle of reversal by taking the 'beauty' of abstract painting to such extremes that it almost threatens to slip into pure superficiality. The inflationary quality of abstract painting that operates with a gestural brush flow and saturated colors is opposed to the serious aspirations and claims of beauty.

Urban music, film, popular sports, youth culture, and the local tradition of storytelling have all influenced the development of **Robin Rhode's** initially typical Street Art aesthetic. His trademark is a wall that stands in a socially disadvantaged district of Johannesburg. In contrast to Graffiti and Street Art, however, he is not interested in what he leaves behind in the urban context, but rather in the process. Step by step, he photographically documents the development of narratives on his stone canvas, which in turn carries its own history. The sum of the photographs forms the narrative. While he initially drew simple sports equipment with chalk on the ground or the wall, his designs and themes have become increasingly complex—a content-related

balancing act between the history, culture, mentality, signs, and codes of South Africa and the abstract language of European art history. Here, the drawing is activated by its connection with the body: Children do gymnastics on sports equipment, a pianist destroys a piano, an agile dancer cuts colored triangles on the wall with a huge hedge trimmer, as if they were cut-outs à la Matisse.

Based on a visual vocabulary of complex forms and surreal body fragments, **Jan-Ole Schiemann's** works oscillate playfully between the limits of abstract painting and anthropomorphic figuration. His pictorial worlds create a dense, sometimes transparent mesh that abandons the contours of clearly defined, special structures in favour of an ambivalent, cleverly interwoven composition. The structures of the pictorial space, created associatively on the basis of stencils and shadowy fields of ink, seem endless. They are delicately woven to form a superimposed net underneath the works, which, in the manner of collages, takes up the multiple references to comics, gestural abstraction, and early animation film in order to link them with references to Arshile Gorky's post-cubist silhouettes or Carroll Dunham's strangely fluid pictorial creatures.

**Markus Amm** (\*1969 in Stuttgart, Germany) lives and works in Geneva, Switzerland. He has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Kunsthau Baselland in Basel, Switzerland; Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Germany, David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; Galerie Karin Günther, Hamburg, Germany and Herald Street, London, UK. His work has been featured in numerous group exhibitions including Los Angeles County Museum of Art; GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Bremen, Germany; Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn, Germany; Bielefelder Kunstverein, Museum Waldhof, Germany and Kunstverein Hamburg, Germany.

**Gregor Hildebrandt** (\*1974 in Bad Homburg, Germany) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. Hildebrandt holds the professorship in painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, Germany.

Currently Hildebrandt's solo show *Luft in allen Zimmern* is on view at G2 Kunsthalle in Leipzig, Germany.

Recent institutional solo and group exhibitions include Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, Germany; The Bass Museum of Art, Miami, USA; The Centre Pompidou in Paris, France; Miami Art Museum, Miami, USA; ICA, Boston, USA; Saarlandmuseum, Saarbrücken, Germany; Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany; Berlinische Galerie, Berlin, Germany; Museum van Bommel van Dam, Venlo, The Netherlands; Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, St. Louis, USA; Kunsthalle Andratx, Mallorca, Spain; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville, Paris, France; Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel; Perrotin Gallery New York, Hong Kong and Seoul; Galerie Almine Rech Paris and Brussels; Gagosian Gallery, London.

Works by Gregor Hildebrandt are in the public collections of the Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Berlinische Galerie, Berlin, Germany; Saarland Museum, Saarbrücken, Germany; Sammlung zeitgenössische Kunst des Bundes, Bonn, Germany; Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Bielefeld, Germany; Museum van Bommel van Dam, AD Venlo, The Netherlands; Martin Z. Margulies Collection, Miami, USA; Sammlung Philara, Düsseldorf, Germany; Rubell Family Collection, Miami, USA; Vanhaerents Art Collection, Brussels, Belgium; Burger Collection, Zurich/Hong Kong; Budi Tek/Yuz Collection, Shanghai, China as well as numerous distinguished private collections.

**Wyatt Kahn** (\*1983) lives and works in New York.

Kahn had solo exhibition at the Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MART), Trento, Italy; the CAM, Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis, USA; LA><ART, Los Angeles, USA; Galerie Eva Presenhuber, New York, USA / Zurich, Switzerland; Xavier Hufkens, Brussels, Belgium and Adrian Rosenfeld Gallery, San Francisco, USA. He was included in group exhibitions at museums and institutions such as the

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XNL Piacenza Contemporanea, Piacenza, Italy; Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Le Consortium, Dijon, France; Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK; Saatchi Gallery, London, UK and the Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, USA.

His work is included in the collections of the The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA; Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, USA; CCS Bard Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, USA; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, USA; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Chicago, USA; Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles, USA; Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles, USA; Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MART), Trento, Italy.

**Gerold Miller** (\*1961 in Altshausen, Germany) lives in Berlin and Pistoia.

Miller's work has been exhibited and collected by museums and private collections worldwide, among them: Nationalgalerie, Berlin, Germany; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark; Kunsthalle Weishaupt, Ulm, Germany; NOMA New Orleans Museum of Art, USA; Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Germany; Neues Museum, Staatliches Museum für Kunst und Design Nürnberg, Germany; Hamburger Kunsthalle, Germany; Museum für Konkrete Kunst, Ingolstadt, Germany; Tel-Aviv Museum of Art, Israel; Museo de Arte Latinoamericano, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna, Austria; Museum Ostwall im Dortmunder U, Germany; Kunsthalle Winterthur, Switzerland; Takasaki Museum of Art, Japan; Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France; Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt am Main, Germany.; Opera City Gallery, Tokio, Japan; Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria; Borusan Contemporary, Istanbul, Turkey; Daimler AG, Stuttgart/Berlin, Germany; Musée de l'Art et de la Histoire Neuchâtel, Switzerland; Museo d'Arte della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano, Italy; Museum Ritter, Waldenbuch/Stuttgart, Germany; Rozenblum Foundation, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Sammlung Schauwerk Sindelfingen, Germany; Société Générale, Paris, France.

**Katy Moran** (\*1975 in Manchester) lives and works in Hertfordshire.

Her work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Sperone Westwater, USA; Parasol Unit for Contemporary Art, London; the Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin, Ireland; Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus USA; Tate St Ives, St Ives; and Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, Middlesbrough. Her work has been included in the recent exhibitions Painter Painter, Walker Art Gallery, Minneapolis, USA; Contemporary Painting, 1960 to the Present: Selections from the SFMOMA Collection, SFMOMA, San Francisco, USA; and Art Now: Strange Solution, Tate Britain, London.

Moran's work is represented in various worldwide collections including Tate, London; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Arts Council Collection.

**Mary Ramsden** (\*1984) lives and works in London, UK.

Ramsden had solo exhibitions at Pilar Corrias, London, UK; The Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO; Atticsalt Gallery, Edinburgh, UK. She was part of group exhibitions at Sid Motion Gallery, London, UK, The Drawing Biennial 2019; The Drawing Room, London, UK; Viktoria Miro; London, UK; Saatchi Gallery, London, UK and Blain Southern, Berlin, Germany among others.

**David Renggli** (\*1974 in Zurich) lives and works in Zurich, Switzerland and Texas, USA.

He had solo exhibitions at Villa Merkel, Esslingen, Germany; Kunstmuseum Bellpark Kriens in Luzern; Migros Museum, Zurich; Museum Rietberg, Zurich; Kunsthalle Freiburg; Kunsthalle St. Gallen (all Switzerland); Museum Kunstraum Baden, Germany and the Associazione Barriera in Turin, Italy.

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Currently works of Renggli are part of the group exhibition *The Spirit of the Kindergarten* at Kasteel Wijnre, The Netherlands. He participated in further group exhibitions at institutions like the Sculpture Art Museum in Qingdao, China; Maison van Doesburg in Meudon, France; Kunstsammlung Chemnitz, Germany; Tate Britain, London, UK; Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland; CCAndratx, Mallorca, Spain and The Swiss Institute, New York, USA.

Works by David Renggli are in the collections of the Migros Museum, Zurich; Kunsthaus Zürich; Museum Bellpark, Kriens; Fotomuseum Winterthur; Bächler Stiftung, Zurich; (all Switzerland); FRAC Nord de Palais, Dunkerque, France; Sammlung Philara, Düsseldorf, Germany; Pizzutti Collection in Columbus, USA and Rosenblum Collection in Paris.

**Robin Rhode** (\*1976 in Cape Town) lives and works in Berlin. Rhode is the recipient of the 2018 Zurich Art Prize.

Major museum solo exhibitions have taken place at the Kunsthalle Krems, Austria; Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany; Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, Switzerland; Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel; S.M.A.K Gent, Belgium; Kulturhuset Stadsteatern, Stockholm, Sweden; Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase College, State University of New York; Kunstmuseum Luzern, Switzerland; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia; Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus; Hayward Gallery, London, UK; Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany and the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University in Massachusetts. His works were part of numerous group exhibitions in institutions like MoMA, New York, USA.

In 2015 he had a solo presentation at the South African Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale. He participated in the 12th Havana Biennial, Moscow Biennale (2013); the 18th Sydney Biennale; 8th Site Santa Fe Biennale, New Mexico (2010); 1st New Orleans Biennial (2008) and the 51st Venice Biennale (2005).

**Jan-Ole Schiemann** (\*1983 in Kiel, Germany) lives and works in Cologne, Germany.

The artist had solo exhibitions at Kunstverein Hannover, Hanover, Germany; Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, USA and Cologne, Germany; Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York, USA; CHOI&LAGER Gallery, Seoul, South Korea; Half Gallery, New York; USA.

Schiemann's works were included in group exhibitions at Almine Rech Gallery, London, UK and New York USA; Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp, Belgium; Kreuzberg Pavillon, Berlin, Germany; Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Germany; Kunstverein Aachen, Germany and Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe, Germany.

His paintings are in the collections of the Bronx Museum, New York, USA; Craig Robins Collection, Miami, USA; Hort Family Collection, New York, USA; The Marciano Collection, Los Angeles, USA; Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, USA; Oetker Family Collection, Berlin, Germany; Rubell Family Collection, Miami, USA; Martin Z. Margulies Warehouse Collection, Miami, USA.