

SEBASTIEN de GANAY

Special guest: **ANNA MANSEL**

Opening on Saturday, 5 November 2022, at 11.30 a.m.

5 November – 22 December 2022

SEBASTIEN de GANAY's entire œuvre is permeated by a central question: what defines a painting? What is necessary to be able to define a work of art as painting? Born in 1962 in Boulogne-Billancourt, since **SEBASTIEN de GANAY** began his artistic activity in New York in the 1980s he has analysed the process of perception and experiments with a great variety of materials. At the intersection between abstract and representational, he combines colour and form to create distinct, often humorous pictorial inventions.

Now, for the first time in twenty years **SEBASTIEN de GANAY** has used canvases for his art: in the series of works *Canvas + Grid* the artist explores the parameters of painting in combination with concrete reinforced steel bars. Reinforced steel, also known as reinforcement rods, is an industrially manufactured normed material used to strengthen precast reinforced concrete constructions. The artist was especially inspired by its haptic qualities, the ruffled surface, to experiment with the building material: the steel rod stands for the painted line, its three-dimensionality throws shadows and reflections on the canvas.

The placing of the rods occurs purely intuitively. In combination with strict geometry and the preferential use of the colours yellow and white, one is reminded of the works of Piet Mondrian and Kasimir Malewitsch. This artist comes to mind in particular when observing a monochrome work from the series: the originally grey rods are varnished white, the square space between them was painted white by **SEBASTIEN de GANAY** with pastose brushstrokes. Malewitsch's *White on White* from 1917 springs to mind. In the works entitled *OPSD (Open System Disc) + Grid* a small round slab of plywood replaces the canvas. By reversing the proportions between support material and the steel rods placed on it, these appear to be more dominant than in the *Canvas + Grids* series. Associations with barred portholes are aroused.

The third group of works in our exhibition, *Wall Pallets* was created, like the two *Grids*, in the past few months in the artist's atelier in Bad Deutsch-Altenburg. Pallets no longer have the function of bearing burdens, **SEBASTIEN de GANAY** uses them as picture carriers. Deprived of their mobility, they serve, rather like the plinth of a sculpture, as the foundation of a monochrome wooden sculpture, which through its colourfulness and consistency again extends the perception process of the observer: it is as if one is looking at metal objects. Yet in reality it is monochrome varnished wood which partially through its relief-like surface produces a rhythmic optical oscillation, and partially is placed in front of the wall like a wedge.

SEBASTIEN de GANAY's works of art not only have a high aesthetic value but in a unique way are instruments for analysing traditional classifications of art.

ANNA MANSEL's works are all one of a kind, hand-made in her atelier in Vienna. Following the Japanese tradition of Wabi-Sabi and Kintsugi, her art focuses on beauty in what is imperfect: the use of the objects refines their appearance and is explicitly desired.

Salzburg, October 2022

Katja Mittendorfer