

Zak Prekop

September 12 – October 25 2015

Opening Reception Saturday September 12 6-8PM

Two Grids, Four Colors, 2015

Oil on canvas

96 x 64 inches (243.84 x 162.56 cm)

This painting has three compositions. One is applied directly and quickly to the canvas in chromium oxide green oil paint with a palette knife. A second is applied in the same color but with a brush and following a glassine stencil. The second group of forms do not overlap the first, instead they approach them but stop a distance close to that of the width of the canvas' thread. The edges of the first forms are irregular and broken because of the speed at which they were applied and the way in which the paint responds to the woven texture of the canvas. The marks dissolve at their edges into grainy bits of paint. The second set of forms define hard edges around the rough edges. Opposing bands of pink diagonally span all of the work's forms but at two different registers, resulting in two grids that slide against each other. The third composition is painted into the grids in cadmium red using a stencil. Because this image is painted inside of the other two, the other two become windows through which to see only parts of this larger form.

Transparency with Nine Rivets, 2015

Oil on muslin

35 x 27 inches (88.90 x 68.58 cm)

Immediately on the backside of the muslin, is an irregular array of red marks. Behind these, further away from the face of the painting, are horizontal bands of blue and black, sequenced evenly, except for the highest and the lowest. All of this can be discerned from the front. Also on the back are irregular marks in black, but they are nearly obscured by pink marks on the front of the painting and only remain visible as thin halos around the pink. Other pink marks on the surface are painted over red and are divided into either solid or patterned fields as they pass over the red marks on the other side of the canvas. The rivets in the work's title refer to nine evenly placed and equally sized circles painted in white over black.

Four Colors with Unpainted Pattern, 2015

Oil on canvas

56 x 42 inches (142.24 x 106.68 cm)

This painting is comprised of shapes in three shades of black paint with narrow gaps of raw muslin between them. What appears to be the foreground of the work was painted first with a palette knife. These marks are darkest because they have been spackled on, which applies more pigment per area than brushing on the paint. The pigment here is a mix of dark green and purple. A second composition in a less chromatic shade of black surrounds these forms but sits behind the first layer visually. It takes shape in a pattern of diagonal bands that create equally spaced points of raw canvas at their intersections and a faint grid where only one coat of paint sits next to two. A third color fills the remaining negative space with a shade slightly more purple than the first.

Transparency with Blue Light and Drawing, 2015

Oil on muslin

96 x 64 inches (243.84 x 162.56 cm)

Marks applied in black paint to the back of the muslin are visible on the front of the painting through the semi-transparent fabric. Similar marks palette knifed onto the front respond to the back, so the composition clings to both sides of the thin barrier that it traverses. A second composition on the work's surface appears as an outline of heavier forms, so that it can be seen though as well. This element was painted onto glassine and then cut out to form a stencil, which was then traced around to create curving lines. On the foremost face of the work, several circles emit a pale blue light, as though portals into a room lit with fluorescent bulbs. These irregular blue circles are painted over slightly larger shapes of deep red.

Shadow and Removed Shape, 2015

Oil on canvas

72 x 52 inches (182.88 x 132.08 cm)

The bottom layer of this painting consists of two compositions in blue, one painted quickly with a palette knife, the other with a brush and stencil. The two sets of forms are both painted over entirely in green except for the edges, so the blue remains visible where it meets the canvas. Then the stenciled component is painted blue again and then black, leaving similar edges of exposed green and blue. The alternating layers visible around the edges of the forms crystalize them, archiving the moment they were put on the canvas by following their contours and irregularities. One shape is left blue rather than painted black, so it too records an earlier stage in the painting's realization. Behind everything, but not before it all, is an upright white on black grid, the scaffolding.

Zak Prekop was born in 1979 in Chicago. In 2009 he attended Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Städelschule in Frankfurt, Germany. In 2008 he received his MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, IL and in 2001 his BFA from Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA.

Prekop has had one person exhibitions at Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago; Thomas Duncan Gallery, Los Angeles; Hagiwara Projects, Tokyo; Galeria Augustina Ferreyra, San Juan, Puerto Rico; Harris Lieberman, New York. Prekop has upcoming exhibitions at the Miller Gallery at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh; and the University of Connecticut Art Gallery. He has previously had group exhibitions at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Cluj Museum, Romania; Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh; Centrum Sztuki Wspolczesnej, Warsaw; Emily Harvey Foundation, New York; Sutton Lane, London and Paris; and MoMA PS1, New York.

This is his first exhibition at ESSEX STREET.

ESSEX STREET

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