

KOEN VAN DEN BROEK

SIGN WAVES

2015. 8. 27 - 10. 8

Gallery Baton is pleased to present the third solo show "Sign Waves" by Koen van den Broek (b. 1973), a painter who has built up a solid presence in Europe and has gained a global reputation.

The title of the exhibition "Sign Waves" is the main subject embracing a wide spectrum of his paintings. It is a notion which the artist has had in mind while he produces the paintings and is also a signpost directly and ideologically connected to each piece of work.

In the works capturing roadsides of certain places, such as *Havana* (2015), *Fence/Dia Beacon* (2015), there are coloured steel-frame structures that were intended to have road names or waymark arrows written on. However these signs are deliberately removed in the paintings. This absence emphasises the eliminated presence, drawing an uncanny effect, creating unfamiliarity in ordinary scenes. When the artist delivers an object from photography to painting by modifying its colour and magnifying or diminishing the image, the outcome attains a permanent disjunction from the original developed picture. Thus throughout Koen's approach in which anonymous places are the key motif, the sign is not the sign anymore.



Koen van den Broek,
Havana, 2015,
oil on canvas, 150x120cm



Koen van den Broek,
Fence/Dia Beacon, 2015
oil on canvas, 180x120cm



Koen van den Broek,
Waves #5, 2015,
oil on canvas, 135x90cm



Koen van den Broek,
Cut Away #3, 2015,
oil on canvas, 180x120cm

The Waves series illustrates waves of two or three primary colours lying scattered at regular intervals, maintaining a particular sense of rhythm. As though it is taking a close up the soft water surface of the canals of Venice that often appears in Canaletto's (1697 - 1768, Italian) oeuvre. In order to depict the existence of time in which the essential element of fluid subjects, the artist selects the method of emptying. The surface painted with a thick layer of beige colour not only implies the direction of the current but increases the tension over the entire work. In a visual aspect, a moving subject means a chain of split moments, therefore the subject, waves no longer remain as an identical shape. This fact corresponds with the attempts that the artist has adhered to. The composition of his paintings stresses on the space that will be filled with something not just vacant. It is a slight hint suggesting what the artist would explore next, yet he has been focused on geometric lines and chunks of colour surfaces in his previous works.

As the melody and structure of classical music born under a strict harmonics have been a foundation for later musicians to cultivate new creative production through years, *Cut Away #3* (2015) is inspired by sculptures of John Chamberlain (1927-2011, American). While Chamberlain demonstrated unrefined anti-modern outpouring paradoxically aroused by roughly reprocessed metals and vivid colour paints by distorting and combining the bodies of disused cars, in Koen's work the primary colour lines with a sense of direction abruptly spread out on a square canvas overlapping and curving. These orange, blue, yellow coloured lines fill up the two dimension flat surface under the artist's own planned intention, at the same time recreating Chamberlain's energetic sensation.

According to Koen, contemporary art has flowed as a massive stream with a long wave. Within the wave, his work and Chamberlain's unconventional sculptures from decades ago exist as component particles and he wanted to make the connection between them reemerge.

Koen continues presenting his works at world leading galleries and museums such as SFMoMA (USA), S.M.A.K (Belgium) and his paintings are in the collection of SFMoMA, LA County Museum (USA) and Leeum Collection (Korea). This artist who draws the full attention from the international art world, Koen van den Broek's the third solo exhibition "Sign Waves" opens from 27 August to 8 October at Gallery Baton, Apgujeong-dong, Seoul. -GB-