

EGERAN

Mel Bochner
Mel Bochner: Recent Paintings
10 May to 16 June 2012
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10 May 2012
Artist Talk: 18:30 to 19:00
Opening Reception: 19:00 to 21:00



Mel Bochner, *Go Away*, 2012

For its inaugural exhibition, Egeran Galeri is delighted to present new paintings by Mel Bochner. An internationally recognized founder and innovator of conceptual art, Bochner will be showing in Istanbul for the first time. This exhibition is the world premiere of an important new body of work that builds on his Thesaurus paintings, an ongoing series that examines the interplay of text and image.

Bochner created his first Thesaurus Portraits in the 1960s. Using Roget's Thesaurus as a source book, he described his artist friends such as Sol LeWitt and Eva Hesse. The descriptive words also applied to their artwork and hinted at a shared private language. With this series the artist investigated the relationship between thinking and seeing and the opacity of language.

Three decades later Bochner came across a new edition of Roget's Thesaurus and discovered that along with an updated vernacular it now included outright obscenity. Bochner's interest in this cultural shift gave rise to a new body of work in which he lists synonyms across a canvas, separated by commas. Toward the bottom of the canvas the words get "ruder, funnier, more bodily."¹ While no longer specific portraits, this series examines the politics of language and its hidden ideologies.

Mel Bochner: Recent Paintings features ten new works that were created in collaboration with Two Palms Press in New York. Using a hydraulic press the artist applies paint on a white velvet ground so that there is clarity of form in the precise letters alongside random washes of color. Here Bochner plays with the effects of color on our perception. Words and letters are multicolored so that reading them becomes difficult as they recede or pop off the colored ground. As our eye wanders, our mind moves away from the meaning of the words and begins to approach the text as an object. A sense of chaos reigns in Bochner's compositions which mimic the experience of looking and call attention to "the devolution of language, from the formal and proper to the vulgar and nasty."²

Mel Bochner was born in 1940 in Pittsburgh and moved to New York in 1964. His works are included in many public collections including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington DC; Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago; Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles; Tate, London and Centre Pompidou, Paris. Recent solo exhibitions include Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago (2006), "In the Tower: Mel Bochner" National Gallery of Art, Washington (2011) and in 2012-13 a major retrospective of Bochner's work organized by Whitechapel Gallery (London) travels to the Museu Serralves, Porto, and the Haus der Kunst, Munich.

An artist talk will be held on Thursday, 10 May from 18:30 to 19:00, followed by the opening reception.

Gallery hours are Tuesday to Saturday from 11am to 6pm. For further information please contact Melis Terzioglu on +90 532 281 8994 or info@egeran.com.

¹ Mel Bochner and Mark Godfrey, *Frieze*, Issue 87, Nov-Dec 2004

² *Ibid.*