

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

BERNARD FRIZE
RED, YELLOW AND BLUE

10 FEBRUARY 2010 – 24 MARCH 2010

OPENING: TUESDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2010, 6–8PM



Simon Lee Gallery is proud to present *Red, Yellow and Blue*, its second show of new paintings by highly regarded French artist Bernard Frize.

The title of the show, *Red, Yellow and Blue* is a reference to Barnett Newman's series of four paintings entitled *Who's afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue* (circa 1966). In this series Newman uses the three colours in their most basic, primary hues, and arranges colour-fields intended to immerse the viewer. Newman's series consisted of large expanses of vibrant red would be punctuated by vertical "zips" of blue and yellow.

Barnett Newman is well known for his decision to strip away much of the Modernist constructs of painting, and follow in a similar vein to fellow abstract expressionists, focusing on redefining the medium and its parameters. Bernard Frize has been influenced by Newman's approach throughout his career. Since the 1970s, Frize has escaped traditional modes of painting, disregarding figurative and compositional subject matter, to focus on the reduction of painting to the physical act itself. Frize focuses on the mechanics of painting, and paints in series, following strict rules, and using specific colour palettes.

Frize's works can be seen as documentation of choreographed acts of painting, often involving many people at once. In previous series Frize has set rules and used elaborate technical processes. The outcome of the work is determined by the process in which it is made, and much is left to chance.

This collection of new work is no different, the resulting "almost ready-mades" are the products of conversations between various pre-existing objects – the canvas, the brush, and the paint. Frize regards each of these objects as tools. His abstract approach to painting often results in striking and powerful images, with bold colours and sumptuous textures. There is no narrative to speak of but there is often directionality to the brushstrokes, which provide a sense of movement and time. The works are rich, layered and mysterious in their conception.

Bernard Frize was born in 1949 in Saint Mandé, France. He lives and works between Paris and Berlin. He has work in numerous public collections, including: The Tate Gallery, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; MUMOK, Vienna; Museo Nacional Centro de Reina Sofia, Madrid; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and the Kunstmuseums, Basel and Zurich.

He has exhibited extensively both in Europe and in the United States including exhibitions at Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France; Museum Gegenstandsfreier Kunst Landkreis, Cuxhaven, Germany; Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Münster, Germany; Gemeente Museum, La Haye, and de Pont, Tilburg, Holland; S.M.A.K., Gent, Belgium; Kunstmuseum St. Gallen; Kunstmuseum Basel, Switzerland; The Bakersfield Museum of Art and The Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, USA.

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