

Chen Ruo Bing – Floating

The essence of painting consists of paint and light. Paint is material, colour is immaterial. There are painters who put an emphasis on the paint material, applying paint thickly, in a pastose manner. In this way, their paintings gain in actual weight. The more paint there is on a painting the heavier it gets. Other painters value light more, its weightless immaterial quality. They dilute their paints and apply them in delicate layers. Gotthard Graubner is a well-known example for this kind of painting. His cushion paintings are produced with flowing, thinly applied layers of paint. However, Graubner did not give up the material altogether, he laid it down in the form to the painting. The colour space has a volume created by material and bulges convexly upwards.

Chen Ruo Bing is Gotthard Graubner's student. From 1992–1998, he studied in Graubner's class at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. Trained in Chinese ink painting, a thin application of paint was very familiar to him, and he knows like nobody else how to create infinite spaces of light with very little paint. For that, he needs nothing more than a flat canvas. The mystery of his paintings is unfathomable. How is it possible that so much is created out of almost nothing? It really comes close to magic. Today, his paintings are reminiscent of James Turrell's colour spaces, they also exude a sense of floating, the space seems to have neither beginning nor end.

Light has been Chen Ruo Bing's subject right from the start. As early as 2005, he called an exhibition "Into the Light". Over the years, he has increasingly dissolved the material aspect in his paintings. Concrete shapes, opaque colours have become more and more intangible. With a brush, paint, and canvas, he gets ever closer to embodying light.

In the exhibition, we are showing both square luminous colour paintings as well as elongated landscapes of light where the horizontal line no longer separates earth and sky, but appears as a voluminous long rod, floating weightlessly in infinite space.

Chen Ruo Bing (born in 1970 in China) studied at the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou, and with Gotthard Graubner at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. He has received numerous prizes and fellowships, including residencies from the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation (2000) and the Heinrich Böll Stiftung (2014). In recent years, he had solo exhibitions at Kunstmuseum Bochum (2016) and the Youngeun Museum of Contemporary Art, Gwangju (2013). As a representative of China's abstract art, he has been shown numerous times in museums in China and Germany.

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Poster
Reverse
untitled (2220), 2022, acrylic on canvas, 80 x 80 cm
untitled (2218), 2022, acrylic on canvas, 80 x 200 cm

CHEN RUO BING

Floating

August 19 – October 8, 2022

Opening August 19, 7 pm

Introduction by Ulrich Loock

painting



