



Untitled, 2015  
Oil on canvas  
76 x 56 cm / 30 x 22 1/16 inches  
Courtesy Galerie Perrotin



## PIETER VERMEERSCH

**Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong**  
**July 3 - August 15, 2015**

Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong is pleased to present the second exhibition dedicated to Flemish artist Pieter Vermeersch, following his first solo show at Galerie Perrotin, Paris in 2013.

Born in 1973, Pieter Vermeersch has developed since the turn of the 2000s a highly conceptual practice of monochromatic painting seemingly at the crossroads between Color Field and Minimalism. While his strictly analytical approach to colors allows him to paint extremely subtle shades of limited hues in a smooth gradient fade that he meticulously unfolds on either canvases or murals, the artist's monochromatic and immersive fields programmatically tend toward what he personally refers to as the pictorial "degré zéro": that is an image balanced between the two polar and antagonistic conditions of its possible existence, abstraction versus figuration, an opposition to which there is supposedly no escaping.

In order to engage in this pictorial paradox, as soon as 1999 Vermeersch started painting from positive and negative prints of photographs as models for reproduction, using gridding and color-mapping techniques to achieve both photorealistic and abstract depictions of utterly indefinite subjects such as cloudless skies or the like, i.e. photographs of unrecognizable yet real colorful and luminous, environmental and atmospheric, occurrences. His working archives in his studio abound with such photographs of pure hues, each without any discernible spatiotemporal referent, for only the colors, the reality of their original sources whatever they may be, and their subsequent representation matter to him. In the artist's own words, the fundamental questions raised by the practice of painting are: "How can we show the essence of paint, while at the same time maintain the representation? Is it possible to show paint as mere paint and yet not renounce the image, the representational content?"<sup>1</sup>

Vermeersch's exhibition at Galerie Perrotin presents two recent ensembles of oil-on-canvas gradient fades and a wall painting installation, which are symptomatic of different tactics that the artist has deployed throughout his monochromatic exploration of the pictorial "degré zéro". The first ensemble,

彼德·維米爾什

貝浩登 (香港)  
2015年7月3日至8月15日

貝浩登 (香港) 很榮幸繼2013年巴黎個展後，第二次為佛蘭德斯藝術家彼德·維米爾什舉辦個展。

彼德·維米爾什生於1973年，2000年後開始創作極度概念化的單色畫，風格表面上介乎色域繪畫與極簡主義之間。他善於分辨色調，能在畫布或牆上精準描繪特定色彩的漸變色調。另一方面，大片單一色彩卻又接近藝術家所謂的圖像「零度」(PICTORIAL 'DEGRÉ ZÉRO')，一個平衡抽象與具象、超越兩極的意象。

面對此矛盾，早於1999年，維米爾什便以相機捕捉模糊對象，把光亮有色的景象（例如一片晴空）拍攝下來，然後根據相片的正、負片，以分格和配色方法複製成既寫實又抽象的畫作。他的畫室充滿這些純色彩相片，全無時空指涉，最重要是色彩、原物的實體及其再現。用維米爾什自己的話來說，繪畫的根本問題是：「如何在再現之中展示顏色本質？可否既展示顏色，又不忘再現內容，不忘意象？」

今次個展會展示維米爾什近期兩組漸變油畫和一個壁畫裝置，從中可見藝術家如何運用各種單色技巧達至圖像「零度」。第一組作品包括兩幅並列大型畫作，全部按照晴空相片繪製，但影像卻上下倒轉，令畫面更顯得模稜兩可、無足輕重。那純潔空靈的漸變色彩經細心臨摹而成，為求像真，色調更與原相片配對；換言之，最終抽象的畫作，背後有其真實依據。

積極推動法國非形式藝術（即歐洲版本的美國抽象表現主義）的「黑色畫家」皮埃爾·蘇拉吉 (PIERRE SOULAGES) 經常說：「我不要再現，我要呈現。」相對於蘇拉吉（更遑論馬克·羅斯科 (MARK ROTHKO)、巴內特·紐曼 (BARNETT NEWMAN) 等色域畫家），維米爾什的想法剛好相反：不要呈現，要再現色彩。

維米爾什另一模糊抽象與再現界線的方法，是複製相片的負片，進而倒轉色調。展廳裏一系列小畫作，都是這類負片作

which consists of two large-scale paintings-on-canvas hanging side by side, was made after photographs of cloudless skies, which the artist reproduced upside down to further their indeterminacy or insignificance as such. The pure, ethereal, gradations of colors were painted as accurately and objectively as possible by laboriously matching tints from the original photographs. In other words, the resulting paintings that unequivocally appear abstract were actually based on real sources.

Contrary to Pierre Soulages, also known as “the painter of black” and a leading figure of the French Art Informel scene (the European pendant of American Abstract Expressionism), who repeatedly asserted this thoughtful aphorism “I don’t represent, I present”, a fortiori contrary to Color Field painters starting with Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman, it has to be stated once and for all that Vermeersch doesn’t present colors but assuredly represents them.

Another strategy that Vermeersch has come up with in order to blur the limits between abstraction and representation has been to use negative prints of his photographs as a starting point for his paintings, allowing him to work with an inverted spectrum of colors. The series of small-scale paintings-on-canvas displayed in the gallery was made after such negative prints, reversing the original hues of their undefined photographic sources as if uncovering another side of reality, where space has become mass. More noticeably, the artist scratched all the paintings of this series with a squeegee, leaving a unique scar in the middle of each plane surface as a way of disfiguring and reintroducing a hint of subjectivity in his otherwise objective, almost mathematical, pictorial process.

As a matter of fact, after years of developing his monochromatic aesthetics and perfecting his seamless gradation techniques, through which he endeavored to erase as much as possible traces of spontaneity, Vermeersch felt the necessity to reintroduce them as a counterbalance without indulging in the lyrical outpouring of Color Field painters to whom he doesn’t relate, for his way of working is simply too analytical. In order to do so, using squeegees or rulers (in other words manufactured tools rather than painterly brush strokes), the artist began scraping away uneven squares of paint in a single gesture, thus creating a tangible tension not only between abstraction and representation, but also between objectivity and subjectivity, which are determinant in comprehensibly opposing Minimalist painting to that of Color Field. The resulting works achieve a perfect balance in manifesting and crystalizing the idea of a presence here and now – the concrete mark left by the passage of the artist’s squeegee – that seem to largely evade from the overall diffuse compositions, even though they reproduce the negative hues of real photographic instants.

Finally, the wall painting installation, which pervades an entire room in the gallery, is characteristic of yet another method of Vermeersch that causes space to vanish through the linear gradation of a single immersive color, here from white to 30% of black. The trace tends to completely disappear in this type of environment, in which there is also no longer external referents for the deliquescing hues. That said, according to the artist, his murals and paintings-on-canvas never cease to echo one another: “The three-dimensional, environmental and contextual work would not exist without the impulses I received from my enquiry into painting on the traditional canvas. And likewise, my current exploration of the possibilities of “traditional painting” is unthinkable without the incentives I got from working in three dimensions and from literally feeling the edges of the pictorial surface.” In other words, the distinction between the two is rather artificial, though unlike the paintings-on-canvas, the murals aren’t about an image. Instead, they are instruments, which operate a soft dematerialization of the surrounding architecture. The artist sometimes inserts a mirror into his installations, which in turn disrupts the viewer’s experience with self-awareness in an otherwise diaphanous environment. This is the existential equivalent to Vermeersch’s pictorial scratches.

品。原本淺色的地方，經轉換色調後，虛變為實，就如揭示了另一面真實。更甚的是，藝術家用橡膠刮刀在每幅畫刮走一角顏色，刻意在畫面中央留下痕跡，為原本客觀精確的創作引入一點主體性。

事實上，多年來鑽研單色美學，繪畫漸變色彩時盡量內斂，維米爾什也感到需要加入個人元素，但礙於畫風較冷靜，不可能像色域畫家般感情奔放。於是，他開始用刮刀或間尺（即用工具而非畫筆效果）刮去大大小小的色彩，以此營造抽象與再現、客觀與主觀之間的張力，而這也正是極簡與色域繪畫的分歧所在。有了這些刮痕，觀者便可適度感知畫家存在於當下，不多也不少；否則，不管畫作如何成功複製負片色彩，畫家也只會隱沒其中。

最後，遍及整個展廳的壁畫裝置，由白色漸變到三成黑色，展示藝術家如何令空間消失。在這裏，色彩無外部指涉，完全與周圍融和。據維米爾什表示，他的壁畫和油畫互相影響：「沒有傳統油畫推動，我的特定立體環境作品根本不會出現；同樣，沒有經過立體創作，真正感受到畫面邊緣，今天我對傳統油畫的探索也無從說起。」換言之，兩者的區分乃人為造成，儘管壁畫與油畫不同，無關乎意象，只是作為工具，逐漸融和周圍環境。維米爾什有時會在裝置中加入鏡子，令人在迷蒙的展廳裏意識到自我的存在，影響觀賞經驗，就如在畫作上增添刮痕一樣。

Violaine Boutet de Monvel



Untitled, 2015  
Oil on canvas  
230 x 170 cm / 90 1/2 x 67 inches  
Courtesy Galerie Perrotin

1. Roelstraete, Dieter, Vermeersch, Pieter, “Spontaneous Dogmatism”, in *Work in Progress*, Cultuurcentrum Strombeek, 2005.

Violaine Boutet de Monvel

On this occasion a 115-page catalogue on Pieter Vermeersch has been published by Galerie Perrotin and Editions Dilecta including a text by Ed Schad in English, French and Chinese.

**Born in 1973, Kortrijk, Belgium, Pieter Vermeersch lives and works in Brussels, Belgium.**

#### **SOLO SHOWS (Selection)**

- 2015** Greta Meert, Brussels, Belgium
- 2014** Carl Freedman, London, UK; Team Gallery, New York, USA; Permanent Installation, Silo à sel, Site de la Voirie de la Ville de Genève, Switzerland; Permanent Installation, Galeries Lafayette, Biarritz, France
- 2013** ProjecteSD, Barcelona, Spain; Galerie Perrotin, Paris, France
- 2012** Appartement Elisa Platteau, Brussels, Belgium; Galerie Elisa Platteau & Cie, Brussels, Belgium
- 2011** Be-Part, Waregem, Belgium; Londonecastle Project Space, London, United Kingdom; Carl Freedman Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 2010** "Reception: Pieter Vermeersch hosts...", represented by ProjecteSD, Barcelona, Art Basel Miami Beach, Miami, Florida, USA; ING Project Space, Art Brussels 2010, Brussels, Belgium; Ensorhuis, Oostende, Belgium; "Reception: Pieter Vermeersch hosts...", ProjecteSD, Barcelona, Spain
- 2009** Beeldenstroom, Berlare – Laarne – Wetteren – Wichelen, Belgium; Carl Freedman Gallery, London, United Kingdom; White Box, New York, USA;
- 2008** SECONDroom, Brussel, Belgium; RONMANDOS Gallery, with Gert Mul, Amsterdam, Netherland, CCNOA, Brussels, Belgium
- 2007** Koraalberg, Antwerpen, Belgium; ProjecteSD, Barcelona, Spain
- 2006** Lieven Gevaert Centre for Photography and Visual Studies, Erasmustoren, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven – Faculteit Letteren, Leuven, Belgium; Galerie CD, Tielt, Belgium; STUK Kunstencentrum, Leuven, Belgium
- 2005** Koraalberg, Antwerp, Belgium; ProjecteSD, Barcelona, Spain
- 2004** "One-Man-Show", Art Brussels 2004, represented by Koraalberg, Brussels, Belgium; "Project Rooms", curated by Peter Doroshenko, Arco '04, Madrid, Spain
- 2003** Koraalberg, Antwerp, Belgium; S.M.A.K. – Kunst Nu, Ghent, Belgium
- 2002** "Work in Progress III", Cultuurcentrum Strombeek, Strombeek-Bever, Belgium
- 2001** "Work in Progress II", Koraalberg, Antwerp, Belgium
- 2000** "Work in Progress I", curated by Dieter Roelstraete, Off the Hook, Ghent, Belgium

#### **GROUP SHOWS (Selection)**

- 2015** "L'Abstraction géométrique belge", L'Espace de l'Art Concret, Mouans-Sartoux, France; "Karsten Födinger / Pieter Vermeersch", Cabinet, Milano, Italy; "Green postcard", Ibid gallery, London, UK
- 2014** "Small Museum for the American Metaphor", Redcat, Los Angeles, California, USA; "Le Labo des Héritiers", MAC's, Grand-Hornu, Belgium; "Monocrimes", Alan Charlton, Joseph Marioni, Olivier Mosset, Joshua Smith & Pieter Vermeersch, Albert Baronian, Brussels, Belgium
- 2013** "The Fifth Dimension", Logan Center Gallery, Chicago, USA; "Happy Birthday Galerie Perrotin / 25 ans", Tri Postal, Lille, France; "Jeunes Collectionneurs", Maison Particulière, Brussels, Belgium; "Jo Delahaut - Hors Limites/Grenzeloos", Botanique, Brussels, Belgium; "About Waves, A Concept About Painting, Part III - Via Het Virtuele", Museumcultuur Strombeek / Gent, CC Strombeek, Strombeek - Bever, Belgium
- 2012** "The meaning of colour", Valerie Traan, Antwerp, Belgium; "Sense and Sustainability", Urdaibai Arte, Urdaibai Natural Reserve, Basque Country, Spain
- 2011** "Found in Translation, chapter L", Casino Luxembourg, Luxembourg
- 2010** "30/30 Image Archive Project 2: A collective collection", PS project space, Amsterdam, Netherland; "Public Private Paintings" & "Bij Ensor op bezoek", Mu.ZEE, Oostende, Belgium; "Tegenlicht", S.M.A.K., Ghent, Belgium; "With Your Eyes Only", YUM, Brussels, Belgium; "Vermeersch", "De Loketten", Flemish Parliament, Brussels, Belgium
- 2009** "With Your Eyes Only. Perceptive moment (an investment in time)", Kunstverein Medienturm, Graz, Austria; "re:print", De Garage Mechelen, Belgium; "Beyond these walls", South London Gallery, London, United Kingdom; "Contour Light", Mechelen, Belgium; "Fading", Museum van Elsene, Elsene, Belgium; "Een Repliek", Resto Overpoort, Ghent, Belgium
- 2008** "Multiple 12", REIS, Antwerp, Belgium; "Brussels Biennial", Brussels, Belgium; "Honors honore", De Garage, Mechelen, Belgium
- "Narratives in space / spatial narration", ACEC, Ghent, Belgium
- 2007** "Entity/Identity", SM, "s Hertogenbosch, Netherlands; "Jafré Biennial", Jafré/ES; "Prix de la Jeune Peinture Belge", Bozar, Brussels, Belgium; "Four4One", Oud-spinnerij de Hemp-tinne, Gent, Belgium; "A Bit O' White", CCNOA, Brussels, Belgium
- 2006** "Factura", De Markten, Brussels, Belgium; "Brainbox crox-room3: unit 5", Croxhapox, Ghent, Belgium; "Freestate", Oud Militair Hospitaal, Oostende, Belgium; "ERGENS/ SOMEWHERE. Pierre Bismuth, Koenraad Dedobbeleer, Pieter Vermeersch in dialoog met de MuHKA-collectie", MuHKA, Antwerp, Belgium; "Mystiek van kleur", Roger Raveel Museum, Machelen-Zulte, Belgium; "Palais des arts 2006", Palais im GroBen Garten, Dresden, Denmark
- 2005** "Lineart Playground", Lineart '05, represented by HISK, Ghent, Belgium; "Super! Triennial Hasselt", Hasselt, Belgium; "Artuatuca Festival", Tongeren, Belgium; "Basics # 2", Croxhapox, Ghent, Belgium; "Overschilderen. Vormen van vermenging tussen Schilderkunst en Andere Media. Een dertigjarige kunstenaars uit Vlaanderen en Nederland samen met Virginie Bailly, Vincent Geyskens, Angelo Vermeulen en Pieter Vermeersch", STUK Kunstencentrum, Leuven, Belgium; "Expanded painting", Prague Biennial 2, Prague, Czech Republic; "Les Ventinelles", Biennale d'Art Contemporain Edition 2005, "Flandre", Anglet, France; "FW: Painting", Montanus.5, Diksmuide, Belgium; "Metamorphosis II. Sergio de Beukelaer, Maryam Najd, Hans Op de Beeck, Pieter Vermeersch", Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Raffaella de Grada, Musei Civici di San Gimignano, San Gimignano, Italy; "Homemaker", Ruimte voor actuele kunst "De Garage", Mechelen, Belgium; "We are family!", Cultuurcentrum Strombeek, Strombeek-Bever, Belgium
- 2004** "Define Yourself – definitions of space", CBK Deventer, Deventer, Netherlands; "A/MAZE", Tréfilier, Brussels, Belgium; "Regarding Muybridge: Eadweard Muybridge, Matt Mullican, Sol Lewitt, Iñaki Bonillas & Pieter Vermeersch, Erick Beltran", ProjecteSD, Barcelona / ES; "Watou Poëziezomer 2004. Als een deur zonder huis die nog openstaat", Watou, Belgium; "Over de Grens/ Across The Border", Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle, Belgium, in collaboration with Frac Nord-Pas de Calais, Dunkerque, France; "A temporary monument for David Mc Comb", STUK Kunstencentrum, Leuven, Belgium; "Hal 23", Ghent, Belgium; "Metamorphosis II." Museo Abelló, Barcelona, Spain; "Methamorphosis II.", Cultuurcentrum De Werf, Geel, Belgium; "The Sublime was Yesterday III. Pieter Vermeersch & Anton Cotteleer", Tijdelijke Kunst-Zone, Ghent, Belgium
- 2003** "Once Upon a Time..." Een blik op kunst in België in de jaren '90", MuHKA, Antwerp, Belgium; "Basics #1", Croxhapox, Ghent, Belgium; "Metamorphosis II.", L.A.C. Lieu d'Art Contemporain, Sigean, France; "Grand Tour", MSK Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Ghent, Belgium; "Speelhoven '03. "Drifting – Dérive", Speelhoven vzw, Aarschot, Belgium; "Work in Collaboration with Iñaki Bonillas", Galería O.M.R., Mexico City, Mexico; Art Brussels, Dexia Contemporary Art Collection, Brussels, Brussels; "Storage and Display", Programmaartcenter, Mexico City / MEX

#### **Gallery information:**

17/F, 50 Connaught Road, Central, Hong Kong  
T: +852 3758 2180 / F: +852 3758 2186  
E: hongkong@perrotin.com  
Opening hours: Tuesday - Saturday 11am - 7pm

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For more information and press enquiries, please contact:

**CdD. I Communications Incubator**  
Stephanie Poon  
stephanie@cdd.com.hk / +852 6209 7957

#### **Media Preview Invitation:**

A media preview will be taking place on Friday January 16th 2015 from 5pm to 6pm.

#### **Galerie Perrotin**

Héloïse Le Carvenec, Head of Press & Communication  
heloise@perrotin.com / +33 1 42 16 91 80

Thomas Chabaud, Press Officer  
thomaschabaud@perrotin.com / +33 1 76 21 07 11