

Jason Martin *Painting as Sculpture*

22 November 2013 – 10 January 2014
Via Zenale 3, Milan

For his sixth solo show with Lisson Gallery, British artist Jason Martin presents a new series of cast copper and nickel works. Trained as a painter in oil and acrylic, Martin began manipulating his chosen material in the early 1990s, dragging, scraping, combing, raking and squeegeeing paint across the surfaces of his canvases and aluminium panels until their edges bled colour and the surfaces picked up textures, gestures and happenstance along the way. This performative process has been complicated in this latest set of cast works, available exclusively through Lisson Gallery, in which thick impasto marks made from brusque, almost baroque sweeps of hand-sculpted material have been solidified into metal in the manner of traditional bronze sculptures or statues.

This jewel-like series of eight panel reliefs hovers between dual registers: between painting and sculpture, between the singular and the serial, between movement and stasis and even between abstraction and figuration, as each viewer is mirrored in the smooth, unpainted sections of the supports. Bravura swirls and snaking rivulets of painterly gesture form endlessly perusable eddies of incident and yet the metallic sheen refutes and repels easy interpretation, making these simultaneously seductive and unyielding, adamant objects.

Martin has further explored the boundary between painting and sculpture in a new floor-bound sculptural work, which resembles a giant, alien seedpod or a chromed meteorite crashed in the gallery courtyard. Also cast in electro-polished steel, this composite object is based on chunks of virgin cork bark found near his studio in Portugal. Its knotty, abstract exterior adding a further remove from the notion of handmade artistic expression normally ascribed to painting.

About the artist

Jason Martin effects oscillations between sculpture and painting, with the vigour of action painting but a controlled hand. He is perhaps best known for his monochromatic paintings, where layers of oil or acrylic gel are dragged across hard surfaces such as aluminium, stainless steel or Plexiglas with a fine, comb-like piece of metal or board in one movement, often repeated many times. Striations catch the light, their rhythmic textures suggestive of the ridges in a vinyl record, strands of wet hair, the grain of a feather – and whose titles flirt with association (*Comrade*, *Amphibian*, *Corinthian*). Martin does away with paint altogether in his wall-mounted casts of copper, bronze and nickel, whose surfaces are unctuous but frozen. In pure pigment works, vivid colour is applied to moulded panels, whose baroque contortions appear like an extreme close-up of a painter's palette. These raw, worked surfaces find their equal and opposite in the recent sculpture *Behemoth* (2012), where the object (a huge cubic pile of cork on the floor) is impregnated with black pigment, rendering it a mass of surface.

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Born in Jersey in 1970, Jason Martin lives and works in London and Portugal. He has a BA from Goldsmiths, London (1993). Solo exhibitions include Le Consortium, Dijon, France (2012), Peggy Guggenheim collection, Venice, Italy (2009), Es Baluard Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani de Palma, Majorca (2008), Kunstverein Kreis Gütersloh, Germany (2007), Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga, Spain (2005). He was a prizewinner in John Moores 21, Liverpool Biennial of Contemporary Art, UK (1999) and of the Golfo della Spezia, European Biennial of the Visual Arts, La Spezia, Italy (2000). His work is held in numerous international public collections including the Government Art Collection, UK; Denver Art Museum, USA; Hirshhorn Museum, Washington DC, USA; Städtische Galerie, Germany and the Centro Arte Moderna e Contemporanea della Spezia, Italy.

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About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, it pioneered the early careers of important Minimal and Conceptual artists, such as Sol LeWitt and Richard Long, as well as those of significant British sculptors from Anish Kapoor and Tony Cragg to a younger generation, including Ryan Gander and Haroon Mirza. Lisson Gallery represents 44 of the most exciting artists working today, including Marina Abramović, Allora and Calzadilla, Ai Weiwei, Gerard Byrne, Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Liu Xiaodong, Tatsuo Miyajima, Pedro Reyes and Santiago Sierra. With two exhibition spaces in London, one in Milan and an office in New York, the gallery supports and develops these artists globally, while the *Lisson Presents* programme also extends a legacy of curatorial innovation beyond the gallery spaces, working with institutions and artists to present new initiatives around the world.

Exhibition Facts

Opening Hours: Monday-Friday 10am-6pm

Location: Via Zenale 3, 20123 Milan

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