

PRESS RELEASE

FROM 13.09 TO 09.11.2018

FABIAN MARTI

THE PITFALLS OF REINCARNATION

24, RUE DU VIEUX-BILLARD

OPENING ON 13.09 –18H

The Art Bärtschi & Cie gallery is pleased to announce *The Pitfalls of Reincarnation*, an exhibition of new works by Los Angeles-based, Swiss artist, Fabian Marti.

Marti's work can be found in many different mediums. Sculptures, photography, painting, and also more socially-based projects around the world. His image-based practice is one that investigates visual codes by establishing an almost hieroglyphic, visual language using recurring pictorial themes. His works are manual and visually exciting - often allowing the mistakes and glitches in a given process to shape his vibrant compositions.

With his new series of paintings for the exhibition *The Pitfalls of Reincarnation*, Marti shines a new light on his growing archive - specifically a *green* light.

Mining his own archive of images, like riffling through a box of old photographs, Marti casts selections from his previous bodies of work as green shadows onto these new canvases. Manually, Marti then carefully, almost tentatively re-touches these green shadows with a paint brush. This act of retouching reads almost like a highlighter marking the important passage in a longer text: drawing our eyes down through a larger composition. These paint strokes (also in green), add a surprising depth and an array of new textures to the surface qualities of the canvasses. It could be argued that these green paintings are intensely personal, and that the color green is used here as a tactic (a red herring, as it were) with which to revisit the ever evolving pictorial themes in his work. This new body of work is not only a self-referential investigation into Marti's own image-making practice, but an exercise in contextual 'remixing' in search of yet-undiscovered connections. Green becomes the filter through which these themes disappear into each other only to be reborn anew.

The paintings are visually striking and alive - they almost vibrate with a remarkable tension afforded by Marti's carefully planned, formal and technical compositions. Phenomenologically speaking, colors are not qualities in objects, but perceptions in our mind. The perception of green is said to encourage relaxation and inspire calm. Physically speaking, green sits right at the middle of the spectrum, and therefore in many cultures and religions has come to represent a sense of balance and natural order.

So where then, in Marti's already complex web of allusions, metaphors and symbols, does the color green fit into the picture? Well, there isn't necessarily any one way that green should make us 'feel', and there certainly isn't any one way that an image should either. This new body of work is a striking challenge to Marti's own visual standards - one that successfully finds a new visual language all its own.

It has been said, that green paintings are notoriously hard to sell. One source quoted Andy Warhol - and added that this might explain his series of green dollar sign paintings, as if he meant to say:

« Wanna bet? »

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