



Julia Rommel
"A Cheesecake With Your Name On It"
Overduin & Co.
27.1. – 12.3.2016

For the past few years, Julia Rommel (*1980) has been exercising variations of the same theme, working out the meditative muscles of her own brand of process painting: paint a monochrome, un-stretch the painting, re-stretch the painting, paint a new monochrome, and so on. Immediately upon reading the description of this seemingly monotonous and contrived activity, a cynical person might think, "This Julia Rommel must be a zombie abstractionist, right?"

Pump the brakes. "Zombie abstractionism" is a lame term used to describe a lame trend. The fact of the matter is that immediately upon approaching any of the numerous larger-than-life canvases at Overduin & Co., it becomes abundantly clear that Rommel's rectangular color fields of patinated patchwork patterns are brimming with life. With each body of work, she continues to demonstrate a convincing determination to find new discoveries through rigorous planning and open execution. Some works "work" and some just exemplify "work". In either case, these paintings appear to revel in the idea of poetry and profundity.

Nobody insisted that Robert Ryman justify his interest in the color white.

Most folks seemed to accept Josef Albers's obsession with squares. Ad Reinhardt was given a pass on both the color black and squares. These days, if someone wants to pursue shapes and colors for more than a year, it's a problem? More people in the art world should have a sense of humor. Let us not forget that Mr. Reinhardt was a hilarious cartoonist. These paintings are, indeed, at times humorous. But they are no doubt serious endeavors. And for this reason, they should absolutely be taken seriously. They bump and grind. They nip and tuck. They shine with stunning presence in the fluorescent grandeur of this Sunset Boulevard storefront.

Senses loaded; sensibilities unloaded. A duct-taped depiction of melted butter and sanded burlap. A greyscale and sepia shakeup on a tabletop; no nostalgia necessary. An elegant shade; an eloquent drape. Quilted strategy, tacked on tastefully. Air, above all else. Files and filmmakers. Scorched policies. A blank slate, refracted and reframed. Rommel states in her self-penned press release: "You have some regrets, but everything you did made you who you are, which is a powerful person, and I even think the aggression and vulnerability of your pursuits were really powerful." Aggression and vulnerability are certainly on full display here. And the current state of abstract painting is better off for it.

Punkin Chunkin (Hydraulics), 2016,
Oil on linen, 197 x 200 cm

John Outterbridge
"Rag Man"
Art + Practice
12.12.2015 – 27.2.2016

Rag and Bag Idiom I

1. A cubist basket of fruit
2. A whitewashed primer
3. A street encyclopedia
4. A public access peace protest
5. A mitten to call home

Rag and Bag Idiom II

1. Cutlery tears
2. Lead balloons
3. Hype broom
4. Nixed pact
5. Goose map

Rag and Bag Idiom III

1. Walk on shoestrings
2. Work on lunch
3. Trade on demand
4. Puppetry on parade
5. Mouthpiece on hand



Case in Point (from the Rag Man Series), ca. 1970, mixed media,
30,5 x 30,5 x 61 cm

Outterbridge: Photo: Brian Forrest