

## GAGOSIAN GALLERY

# ARTFORUM

CRITICS' PICKS

## Rome

### Christopher Wool

#### GAGOSIAN GALLERY

Via Francesco Crispi 16

May 25–July 30

The eight large, untitled linen canvases in this exhibition more than hold their own in the ample—and potentially overwhelming—space of Gagosian's Roman digs. The two paintings in the atrium are marked by a play of tight, textured geometries streaked with blood-red ink. These give way to a more subdued palette of black, white, and rust in the remaining works. Several of these bear spindly lines and arabesques, verging on the calligraphic. But they stay just shy of congealing into any recognizable script or sign.

The silk-screened reproduction of painted, gestural brushstrokes raises some well-worn questions about autonomy and authority—questions broached, in different ways, by the work of Rauschenberg and Warhol, to whom Wool's output owes some debt. But Wool has inflected these notions with some further, nuanced dimensions. Specifically, some of the canvases appear overlaid with

patches and splatters of white paint, whether in random

patterns or seemingly applied with a paint roller. Closer inspection, however, reveals a small but important difference between at least two of the works. While one's surface has indeed been painted over with white enamel, another's comparable pattern is in fact the result of the absence of silk-screened ink patterning, leaving this section of canvas empty. The respective voids, then, are different: One is additive, the fruit of a handmade addition; the other is subtractive, the result of a lack or withholding. These are subtle, even heady, nuances; but their conceptual upshot perhaps merits as much reflection as do the dynamics of Wool's surfaces.



Christopher Wool, *Untitled*, 2010, silk-screen ink on linen, 10 1/2 x 8'.

— *Ara H. Merjian*

VIA FRANCESCO CRISPI 16 00187 ROMA T. +39 06 42086498 F. +39 06 42014765

ROMA@GAGOSIAN.COM WWW.GAGOSIAN.COM