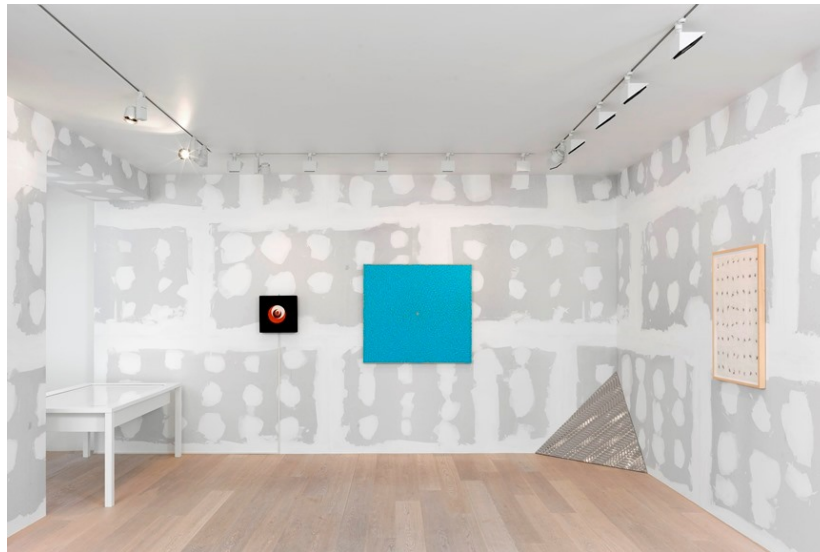


GAGOSIAN GALLERY

WIDEWALLS

Horror Vacui

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Present in the visual arts for centuries, horror vacui is the phenomenon that refers to the lack of any unfilled space on a painting surface, whether it is a drawing, painting or a piece in different media. It's frequently used in describing Outsider art pieces, as the unconventional authors endeavored in relentless adding of more and more details to the work, where even the tiny fragments obtain a certain form. Allowing for an empty portion of canvas to protrude the vision is unacceptable, as the void must be covered. To hide the meaning, or to emphasize it. Gagosian gallery is presenting a different idea of this pictorial notion in two parallel exhibitions, one at Gagosian Geneva, and another at Gagosian Athens, entitled *Horror Vacui*. Both shows have a goal of proposing Op Art as an inadvertent byproduct of the artistic process, characterized with complete lack of free space. Elements occasionally create suggestive or optically challenging formations, delving into another stylistic plane.

### Duchamp's Rotoreliefs

Artists selected for both shows have been chosen according to their pertinent visual experiments. The name of Marcel Duchamp appears with little surprise, he invented the *Rotoreliefs* in 1923 (six years after the revolutionary *Fountain*). The invention is a visual game with a particular hypnotic effect, often meant to be spun around on a turntable at 40 to 60 rpm. Rotoreliefs invoked a false impression of whirlpool and depth, and Duchamp and Man Ray even filmed early versions of the spinning round plates for the short film *Anémic Cinéma*. As father of

conceptual art and Dada master, Duchamp, also enlisted the finding in an inventors' fair, but these trance-inducing platters failed to find a single buyer.

### Artists Who Experiment

The list of participating artists differs from Gagosian Geneva to Gagosian Athens. In Geneva William Anastasi, Marcel Duchamp, Urs Fischer, John Houck, Y.Z. Kami, Harmony Korine, Joel Morrison, Paul Noble, Nancy Rubins and Richard Wright are showing their optical experimentations. In Athens, some artists are repeated, such as Anastasi, Fischer, Rubins, Wright and Houck, but with the addition of Bruce Nauman, Roman Opalka, Richard Phillips, Despina Stokou, Piotr Ulanski and Rachel Whiteread.

### Fear of Empty Space and Optical Effects

As horror vacui is inherently related to space, pieces that deal with spatial perception and use have been chosen. Therefore, Urs Fischer communicates his spatial occupancy through witty wallpaper that looks like a raw drywall, inverting the mimetic quality, while endowing the space with undefinable boundaries. Corners of rooms, rarely used in galleries, have been transformed by Joel Morrison's piece made in stainless steel, rendering them lustrous and broad, while Rachel Whiteread treats the entire space as a sculptural matter.

Nancy Rubins's drawings are characterized by a completely altered surface by countless layers of graphite. They've changed superficial color and quality, became metallic, as the paper is frequently torn, conjuring unexpected visual effects. William Anastasi's Pocket Drawings are executed inside his pocket, while Roman Opalka's oeuvre was dedicated to counting towards infinity. Mark-making makes a strong base of their practices, but as the painting areas are completely covered, no space is left empty on purpose. Harmony Korine's checker paintings allude to Vasarely's Op Art, but being liberated from perfection, they possess an organic note as well.

### Horror Vacui Exhibitions

Repetition and addictive scribbling gained a compulsive note in the works presented at both *Horror Vacui* exhibitions, which is exactly what gives them their optical abundance. *Horror Vacui* opened at Gagosian Geneva on October 2, where it will run through December 20, 2014, and in Gagosian Athens, the corresponding show will open on October 30, remaining on view by December 20, 2014 as well.