



VITAMIN

P3

NEW
PERSPECTIVES
IN PAINTING

PHAIDON

The paintings of South African artist Zander Blom exhibit a sculptural quality: large canvases filled with rectangles or odd shapes, each sitting autonomously, claiming their own space. These abstract forms are viscerally appealing, with crude colours buzzing amidst a repetitive fractal rhythm, a sense of expanding symmetry palpable among the shapes. Blom energizes his painting practice by employing new tools that enable him to try new techniques. Rarely using brushes, he relies heavily on palette knives and squeezes paint directly from the tube; he has developed homemade devices that mimic the shape of paint applied in this way and often mixes his own pigments. In other paintings, Blom uses modified syringes to draw solid lines of colour, intricately lining up one line after another with surgical precision. Elsewhere, palette knives with tiny teeth result in marks reminiscent of scallop shells, their contour lines dipping and diving. With a colour palette that ranges from dark tones – where blues, greys and whites are complemented by rusty oranges, browns and reds that weave like parallel lines on a life-support machine – to acidic juicy planes of bubble gum pink, canary yellow and apple green that work to energize the canvas, Blom's paintings feel schizophrenic – a vibrating vigour within boldly defined shapes. His forms cling to the bare linen canvas beneath, which is always a husky earthy tone. Into this material seeps the oil from the paint itself, creating a drop shadow that gives each shape a feeling of three-dimensionality and depth. They become plastic shapes that seem to have been moulded with speed and precision. Blom often works quickly and spontaneously and then waits for long periods of time for the paint to dry before smoothly and tightly packing on the next layer of detail. Paint is pulled and swept across the surface plane.

The artist cites as influences the likes of Vincent van Gogh (1853–90) and Pablo Picasso (1881–1973), but perhaps most significantly, Francis Bacon (1909–92), who strongly informs Blom's approach to the canvas. Bacon's figures, often underpinned by a sense of mutation and anxiety, are contained within confined or defined spaces. Blom's own shapes fix his images within a sense of delineated space, in homage to Bacon's interiors. In other works where he breaks up forms into bold shapes of pure colour, we might notice references to Henri Matisse's (1869–1954) potent and bright paper cut-outs which the artist turned to towards the end of his life.

Blom approaches his canvases as a landscape of the imagination, an emotional space in which to become immersed. Describing his practice, he has said that: 'When I started painting the gap between what I wanted to make and what I was able to make was massive. In the last three years it seems like the gap has shrunk significantly, while at the same time the work has developed into something that I could never have imagined from the outset. I tend to favour an experimental practice instead of simply rendering clearly formed ideas onto canvas ... So in a way I've followed the medium instead of trying to make it follow me ... I generally try to hang back and not intervene too much.'

– Louisa Elderton

ZANDER BLOM Born 1982, Pretoria, South Africa. Lives and works in Cape Town, South Africa. Selected Solo Exhibitions: 2015 – 'New Work', Galerie Hans Mayer, Düsseldorf; 'January', Mixed Greens, New York; 2014 – 'New Paintings', Stevenson, Cape Town; 2013 – 'New Paintings', Stevenson, Johannesburg; 2012 – 'Zander Blom: Place and Space', Trois Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia; 2010 – 'The Black Hole Universe: Mapping the Void', 5x6x9, Berlin; 'Paintings. Drawings. Photos.', Stevenson, Cape Town. Selected Group Exhibitions: 2015 – 'Material Matters: New Art from Africa', Institute of Contemporary Art Indian Ocean, Port Louis, Mauritius; 2014 – 'Thinking, Feeling, Head, Heart', The New Church Museum, Cape Town; 2013 – 'The Evolution of Art 1830-2140', Kuckei + Kuckei, Berlin; 2011 – 'The Global Contemporary: Art worlds after 1989', ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe; 2010 – 'Ampersand', Daimler Contemporary, Berlin. Selected Bibliography: 2016 – Daniel Scheffler, 'Zander Blom explores 21st century modernism at Stevenson, Cape Town', *Wallpaper*, Mar; 2014 – Alexander Matthews, 'Rorschach taste', *The Sunday Times*, Sep; 2012 – Leigh-Anne Neihaus, 'Making The Invisible Visible', *Seeing-eye*, Jun.



1.



2.

1. Untitled [1.733], 2015
Oil on linen
210 × 150 cm / 82 3/8 × 59 in
2. Untitled [1.757], 2015
Oil on linen
198 × 140 cm / 78 × 55 1/2 in
3. Untitled [1.752], 2015
Oil on linen
250 × 198 cm / 98 3/8 × 78 in



ETEL ADNAN
AHMED ALSOUDANI
MICHAEL ARMITAGE
LUCAS ARRUDA
MATH BASS
SADIE BENNING
KATHERINE BERNHARDT
MCARTHUR BINION
ZANDER BLOM
DANIEL BOYD
JOE BRADLEY
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JUAN JOSÉ CAMBRE
MASAYA CHIBA
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LEIDY CHURCHMAN
MATT CONNORS
MARY CORSE
NJIDEKA AKUNYILI CROSBY
CUI JIE
VALENTINA D'AMARO
DEXTER DALWOOD
JULIA DAULT
DAVID DIAO
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PATRIZIO DI MASSIMO
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YUNHEE MIN
DONALD MOFFETT
MELEKO MOKGOSI
SABINE MORITZ
RYAN MOSLEY
ULRIKE MÜLLER
OSCAR MURILLO
ELIZABETH NEEL
BLESSING NGOBENI
ALIZA NISENBAUM
SERGE ALAIN NITEGEKA
MAIREAD O'HEOCHA
ÉDER OLIVEIRA
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RODEL TAPAYA
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TOREY THORNTON
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METTE WINCKELMAN
ROSE WYLIE
XU QU
YU HONG
YUAN YUAN