

# ABSTRACT CONVERSATIONS



PAULA BAADER

MARIANNA GIOKA

QINGZHEN HAN

ANNA KLIMENTCHENKO

MAAIKE SCHOOREL

EDUARDO STUPIA

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rosenfeldporcini

37 Rathbone Street, London W1T 1NZ

rosenfeldporcini is proud to present 'Abstract Conversations' featuring Eduardo Stupia, Anna Klimentchenko, Paula Baader, Marianna Gioka, Qingzhen Han and Maaïke Schoorel.

As the ferocious argument about the relevance of painting within the panorama of contemporary art recedes once again, there is a fresh, distinctly perceived urgency in how artists are once more embracing the medium without fear of being outdated and irrelevant. One of the current strands involving artists across the globe is represented by gestural painters adopting a minimalist attitude to their work. Where often contemporary art leaves nothing to the imagination and can be read virtually instantaneously by a generation brought up on instant visual gratification, these artists take on a 'slow food' philosophy to their practice. Their complex worlds are rather impenetrable to our superficial deciphering as their paintings resist digital translation and reassert the almost unique longevity of the medium along with its continuing ability to communicate with us at a mysteriously profound level.

The six painters featured in 'Abstract Conversations' take us back to the idea of language as the predominant element of artistic innovation.

Echoing Piet Mondrian's famous quote 'every artist has been inspired more by the beauty of lines and colour and the relationships between them than by the concrete subject of the picture', **Qingzhen Han's** (\*1990 Dalian, China) wide variety of gestures is a vehicle to convey a pure emotional state through the essentials of painting: the mark, the line and colour. Beginning by covering her canvases with 'gesso' thereby creating a unique backdrop, Han's marks stretch to the very extremities of the canvas and vary not only in shape and size but also, significantly, depth.

**Paula Baader's** (\*1988 Hamburg, Germany) seemingly abstract canvases actually refer to specific places all recalled by the artist from memory. She lays the unstretched canvas roll on the ground and then spills or pours thinned paint to build up a means of working; "what I find in front of me is a mixture of chance, accidents and determined decisions."



Eduardo Stupia, landscape 2016

**Anna Klimentchenko's** (\*1978 Kirov, Russia) paintings are also about what it is like to remember. In Klimentchenko's paintings, the subtlety of the layered surfaces slowly emerges, revealing their meditative character. Images appear and disappear in relation to the viewer's movements. Exploring different types of wet and dry painting/drawing media and developing a printing method akin to monotype, Klimentchenko combines watercolours, inks and acrylics to create subtle shifts of colour.

The Dutch painter **Maike Schoorel** (\*1973, Santpoort, The Netherlands) has steadfastly in her career followed a very definite figurative agenda yet always by giving us the bare minimum of information. By providing only a carefully selected amount of brush strokes. Schoorel wants the viewer to fill in the gaps and complete the composition on their own. One of the works in the exhibition is an extraordinary version of Frans Hals 'Banquet of the Officers of the Guard'. This latter work involved her getting the original seventeenth century Dutch masterpiece to be re-enacted by children, photographing it and then, finally, beginning the painting. This follows on from her recent solo exhibition at the Gemeente Museum, Den Hague, The Netherlands, 2017.

Through a continual evolution in his practice, **Eduardo Stupia** (\*1951, Buenos Aires, Argentina) has been adding a bewildering array of materials such as pencil, graphite, charcoal, gouache, crayon, paint, ink and pastel to his drawings over the years. Created as if in a stream of consciousness, his canvasses and works on paper, recount a map of human emotions. Stupia's rich tapestry of gestures, which incorporates both abstraction and figuration, makes up an imaginary interior landscape, in a Post-Freudian sense: a landscape of our inner world.

**Marianna Gioka** (\*1981, Athens, Greece) has also emerged out of a concern for landscape combined with an interest in architecture. The 'Invisible Cities' series from 2011 is inspired by the Italian writer Italo Calvino. As the title suggests, it explores the cryptic essence of a fictional city whose features and shapes can only be outlined through our interpretation of the artist's lines and hints of structure. The other recent works no longer contain the sense of an architectural structure and involve painting the canvas with oils before beginning the extensive process of mark-making with ink.

In an art world more and more defined by approaches to narrative, these artists have put the tools of their trade at the summit of their concerns and thus helped to make 'form' the protagonist once again.