

Ross Chisholm
The Cratylists

30 August – 25 October 2014

Opening hours:
 Wednesday to Friday 11am – 6pm
 Saturday 11am – 5pm
 and by prior arrangement

Grieder Contemporary is delighted to announce the gallery's third solo show with the British artist Ross Chisholm. *The Cratylists* (an allusion to Plato's famous Cratylus dialogue) is the first exhibition of large-sized paintings by the artist in which he has developed a new, intriguing abstract language that has an overwhelming painterly quality.

Chisholm continues to explore the idea of art production and the impossibility of reproduction, the question of artistic identity and the limits of the agency of the artist. The points of orientation for this new body of work have been the 18th century society portraits by Thomas Gainsborough, George Romney and most of all by Joshua Reynolds. The latter developed in his famous "Discourses on Art" an influential art theory based on classical and contemporary philosophical and art theoretical writings. Reynolds held the view that painting can be more than mere imitation. The point of artistic activity was, according to Reynolds, the transformation of inner images into outer images as conveyors of knowledge. The picture was assigned an almost semantic significance that went beyond the visible. Reynolds' achievement was to turn pictures into instruments of communication that are not just the result of passive observation, but which make demands of people as artists or observers. Reynolds' palette, mixing technique and light application of colour were correspondingly experimental, although Gainsborough with his sensual palette and technique was the more experimental painter.

Ross Chisholm found himself asking whether it was still possible to capture the essence of these pictures. To what extent does the artist have influence over his work, particularly as it ages over time and is subjected to periodic restoration? Are the cues set by the artist 250 years ago still effective today, despite continuous changes in the form? Chisholm developed his answer as a painter – one who does not just portray but, like a philosopher, attempts to explore things independently of their designations; in doing so, as he puts it, he as painter experienced a significant relief from the inhibitory effect exerted by the original. Chisholm adopted a two-step approach to the originals. Each portrait was first executed as a small loose/abstract copy that could be interpreted as an initial experience. Taking this as his starting point, he then freed himself radically from the representational original and self-created loose copy by executing a large-scale, expansively painted interpretation of what he had observed and experienced. The outcome is entirely autonomous, imposingly large paintings whose freshness and intensity immediately captivate.

Ross Chisholm (*1977) studied at the Goldsmiths University, he lives and works in London. His works have been widely shown throughout Europe and the United States as well as Australia and the United Arab Emirates, with solo shows at Green Art Gallery, Dubai (2014), Ibid Projects, London (2012), Marc Jancou Contemporary, New York (2011), and Grieder Contemporary, Zurich (2010). Recent group exhibitions include *Hirschfaktor – Die Kunst des Zitierens* at ZKM, Karlsruhe (2010), *Rive Gauche/Rive Droite*, Marc Jancou Contemporary, Paris, *me collectors Room Berlin*, The Olbricht Collection, Berlin (both 2010).

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