

IMI KNOEBEL

LIAISON ASTÉROÏDE

SALZBURG VILLA KAST

29 Jul 2016 - 27 Aug 2016



Opening: Friday, the 29th of July 2016 at 6.30pm

Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is pleased to present the exhibition *Liaison Astéroïde* by Minimalist German artist Imi Knoebel, from 29 July to 27 August 2016.

Liaison Astéroïde is composed of several acrylic-on-aluminum paintings that are presented in groupings of geometric panels. The exhibition title, which may seem unexpected at first, is in fact inspired by a real phenomenon, described in a scientific article published in 2014, upon the discovery of planet Itokawa's composition, which was formed in the aftermath of two small variously-composed asteroids colliding. These fused and created a single misshapen asteroid "resembling a peanut," the bottom of which consists of sandy and porous stone, while its top is composed of granitic and dense stone.

Fascinated by the misshapen aspect of this asteroid, Imi Knoebel considers the incoherence and the irregularity of the composition to be an integral part of its identity. The large format of his new series addresses the concept of an amorphous body as an identity, founded upon the link between two distinct elements. He approaches these paintings as if possessed by double or even multiple personalities, where light and rectangular forms mix with round and circular forms, almost organically. Where these different forms coincide, Knoebel has chosen to let them overlap, and not to superpose them. Because of the differences in color and form, the observer at first maintains an impression of strata, so dear to the artist, but these are in fact erased, and leave room for a smooth and unified surface.

Works like *Bastards*, *Flags*, as well as the combinations of squares evoke a chaotic geometry of monochrome and bichromatic forms tending towards the rectangular. They each possess a perfectly straight and linear side in common, which reminds us of the dichotomy of this new ensemble of configurations.

With his new series, Imi Knoebel explores yet again the remarkable varieties of reduction and abstraction, all while upholding a subtle, timeless equilibrium. Like Malevich, his undeniable master, Imi Knoebel, here confirms his taste for emotional manipulation of geometry, aspiring to an almost metaphysical creation situated between spirituality and materiality.

In 2002 Max Wechsler discussed "the poetry of Knoebel's exactitude", a term that describes "this presence of rationality and irrationality, of calculation and intuition, of reason and emotion that traverses the artist's entire oeuvre" (*Die Poesie der Genauigkeit*, in the catalogue Imi Knoebel, *Pure Freude*, Kestner Gesellschaft Hanover, 2002)

Seven paintings from the series *Liaison Astéroïde* were displayed for the first time in the exhibition *Imi Knoebel – Works 1966-2014* at Kunstmuseum of Wolfsburg in 2014.

Imi Knoebel was born in Dessau, Germany in 1940. He lives and works in Düsseldorf, Germany.