

ROSEGALLERY is pleased to present *Navigating Pigment* a presentation of works by Manfred Müller and Shaun McCracken.

Manfred Müller's series *Subaqua* stratifies three components: original selection, resizing and manipulation, and introduction of new materials, hence the difficulty in strictly defining the work. Each piece bases itself in an early 20th century archival photograph, ostensibly taken in the Arctic; oftentimes the images feature rugged and bold human subjects in the midst of happenstance quests (plotting navigations, mapping regions, marking game, etc.).

Curator plays a pivotal role here, with chance and choice governing the next stages of expression. Complicating matters further, the artist then takes it upon himself to imbue the work with a watercolorish splashing of painstaking blue; his ritualistic crafting of pigment, turpentine, Japanese dryer, and linseed oil brings an

advancement of raw emotion to the foreground, thus forcing the past into an act of perceptual receding. A protege of Heerich and Beuys, *Subaqua* continues Müller's legacy as an architectural minimalist, with a quixotic knack for performance-based pieces that "openly disclose the process of their formation" (Howard H. Fox, "A Multitude of Echoes: The Art of Manfred Müller").



Shaun McCracken's paintings explore hard-edged geometries by incorporating line, colour, shape, texture, divisions, and their interactions, to create intimately scaled art works that are contained, self-sufficient and unique visual experiences. Color is the basis of McCracken's work, with a specific color defining the palette for a day's painting session. McCracken notes, "Each day a new colour

is picked and usually it is a color that contradicts, compliments or clashes with what I used the day before. Color is built up over many layers of paint – and I look for interesting juxtapositions even within a single color area - a pink over a green or an orange over a purple for example. So color is one of the first issues I think about when I start painting - and is one of the defining elements that tells me when a painting is finished."

In the early stages of McCracken's work, the geometric shapes contained within his works are free formed and somewhat arbitrary. As the painting progresses, these shapes and patterns become carefully considered. However, there is no pre-planning or preliminary drawing that is utilized to create his compositions.

Both Müller and McCracken examine the idea of how an artwork can progress. For Müller, it is manipulating and recontextualizing his source material. He intentionally obscures and highlights different elements of the original photographs through physical manipulation such as watercolor and pigment. McCracken explores progression through an almost organic creative process. His patterns and color grow and grow from the single decision that was made prior.

*Navigating Pigment* will be on view at ROSEGALLERY from 2 March, 2024 to 6 April 2024  
Opening Reception: Saturday, 2 March, 2024, 2-5 pm.

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