

KUNSTHAUS ZÜRICH

Markus Oehlen, artist (*1956 Krefeld)



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Title	Untitled
Also known as	Ohne Titel
Date	2008
Medium	Mixed Media on Canvas
Dimensions	image: 250 x 200 cm
Signature	inscr. on verso u. r.: m.oehlen 08
Inscription	verso gallery label: [Juana de Aizpuru]
Catalogue raisonné	-
Edition / number	-
Edition	-
Inv. No.	ZKG.2017/0092
Credit line	Kunsthau Zürich, 2017
Accession year	2017

Object type	painting
Classification	E 1[2] art 21st century worldwide

Description	<p>This painting caught our eye. When we, the curators of the Kunsthau, met again at Art Basel as is tradition, we did not know at first who it was by. The large-format canvas painting is striking for its strong colourfulness, almost aggressive chromaticity, and the main motif, the gnome-like creature with piercing eyes and a cheeky grin, literally jumps out at you.</p> <p>Markus Oehlen, the German artist born in Krefeld in 1956 (the younger brother of the painter Albert Oehlen), studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy after training as a technical draughtsman and now teaches painting and graphics at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts.</p> <p>The strength of the painting lies in the montage of abstract surfaces, gridded colour gradients and the figure, which appears, as it were, in a more forward optical plane and thus achieves great, almost physical presence, yet does not appear naturalistic. The combination of drawing, gestural painting, technoid grids and decorative patterns is reminiscent of Sigmar Polke's paintings in the Kunsthau. In contrast to Polke, however,</p>
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Markus Oehlen seems to be less concerned with the conceptual and sometimes quite ironic combination of very different artistic techniques than with creating a varied pictorial structure with an astonishing, almost aggressive presence - probably also a reminiscence of the punk movement that shaped the artist in the 1970s. The painting, alienating in a positive sense, captivates through the balance between the various means of design and exudes an enigmatic, luminous colourfulness with a great long-distance effect.

The new work is a distinctive addition to the important group of recent and contemporary German paintings in our collection. International art fairs and galleries, but also artists' studios and direct contact in connection with exhibition projects are usually the sources for the Kunsthhaus's acquisitions: the team of curators discusses proposals, sometimes over a longer period of time, always against the background of the existing collection, which we continue to expand and sharpen its profile through carefully selected acquisitions. And occasionally our enthusiasm spreads abruptly, so to speak, and leads - as in this case - to spontaneous acquisitions.

Provenance Markus Oehlen (*1956 Krefeld) (Künstler/-in)
2017, Galeria Juana de Aizpuru (Galerie), Madrid
ab 2017, Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft | Kunsthhaus Zürich (Museum), Zürich, Kauf

Provenance category -

About the provenance

Literature - Jahresbericht 2017, hrsg. von Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, Zürich, 2018, S. 43.
- Christoph Becker: «Markus Oehlen. Untitled, 2008», in: Jahresbericht 2017, hrsg. von Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, Zürich, 2018, S. 32-33.