

# M. L<sup>E</sup>BLANC

## Anne Haack | Stefan Müller

The exhibition 'Anne Haack | Stefan Müller' is the debut exhibition of both artists' work in Chicago.

Contrary to much of recent abstract painting that so often is defined through its irony, social performance, or even parroting of postmodern tropes, both Haack and Müller's declares the worth of sincerity - that all art is a process, of becoming, where knowledge and utility have little value when contrasted with the immense power of the lived affective experience, of the world entering into the work.

Haack discusses her painting as not being a form of self-expression, in the sense that something has to come out, but rather come in. She describes the work as an affirmation, an opening, like a crack, a moment of 'passive following', where power is sourced through the typically unseen emergence of being made visible or tangible. The exceptionally tall paintings exhibited, which loom over the viewer, demonstrate these aforementioned qualities, providing visitors a space in which they have a bodily experience of the threshold where the world enters into space of painting.

Not dissimilar, Stefan Müller, alludes in his work to a kindred ethos, where works emerge through a habit of working and reworking the painting practice in itself, through a commitment to not the subject matter that the work is about, but rather to aim directly at the work itself, to allow the work to divulge itself. Müller's work has been described as undermining, 'his own recognizable individual signature, his emotion and subjectivity... - by means of casual, sloppily executed painting.' This approach has defined Müller's practice over the past few decades, a new iteration of painting in the context of recent contemporary histories of post-conceptual painting and relational aesthetics.

While of different generations, together the artists share a contrasted dedication to the humanism of painting. Müller's typically intimate works, made slipshod and shaped from studio debris, echo resistance to the cognitive stylism that haunted his mentors, while Haack's oversized canvases, that are light on gesture and heavy on affect, clarify again these principles, amassing gravity through presence and the restoration of the phenomena between painting, the painted, and the world.