

STEPHEN FRIEDMAN GALLERY

Channing Hansen

Private view: 7 June 2017

Exhibition dates: 8 June – 29 July 2017



Stephen Friedman Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new work by Los Angeles-based artist Channing Hansen. This is the artist's first solo exhibition in the United Kingdom, as well as with the gallery. Hansen is a polymath, simultaneously pursuing interests in craft, science and technology. His large hand-knitted textiles are mounted on bare wooden stretchers and presented like paintings. Vibrant abstract forms undulate across the meticulously composed surfaces. For Hansen, the works are a kind of portal "suggesting a physical continuum in which a work of art exists in two, three, and even four dimensions": a frame through which to look at the world.

Hansen took up knitting to occupy his energetic mind while away from the studio and quickly became a proficient knitter. It has since become the focus of his practice and he often uses stitches or combinations that he developed himself. Hansen takes a great interest in all aspects of the craft and uses wool from rare breeds of sheep raised on a farm in Idaho such as 'California Variegated Mutant', 'Teeswater' and 'Wensleydale'. An extremely labour intensive process, he skirts, washes, dyes, blends and spins the wool himself. The unwieldy knitted forms are then stretched over wooden frames that remain visible through the knit. The size and composition is determined only in the final stage, when the work is pulled flat.

The seemingly organic composition of flowing forms in each work is structured according to computer-generated algorithms. Hansen follows these 'instructions' for changes in colour, fibre and type of knit, without knowing what the work will look like once finished. For these new works, he used codes that were based on the makeup of his own DNA. He thinks of the algorithms as 'Fluxus scores', and so the works are made in a process between the artist and the algorithm. He explains: "My Fluxus leanings compel me to think of this transfer of energy as an on-going function of art/life, not as a performance, even if you happen to see me do it in public".

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Hansen's work is vibrant and seductive, using a combination of 'ecru' and dyed wool in unusual combinations. He has incorporated phosphorescing polymers into the yarn for the first time, and so some of the colours in the new works seem florescent. He develops pigments with a scientist friend who also works for NASA, further using scientific knowledge to enrich his practice.

Hansen's work has been described as akin to drawing, sculpture and painting. To him, each work is all three until an audience sees it. He explains this with reference to quantum mechanics, which is a field concerned with matter that cannot be quantified. It is only through the introduction of consciousness (seeing) to a situation, that the matter can be measured. In this way, Hansen's works are "in all states, all at once".

These new knitted works exemplify the strength of Hansen's technique. He uniquely draws on elements of craft, science, technology and art history to reassess what it means to make a 'painting'. When describing his practice, Hansen cites Robert Irwin "To be an artist is not a matter of making paintings or objects at all. What we are really dealing with is our state of consciousness and the shape of our perceptions."

Gallery One: Painting on the Edge: A Historical Survey

Gallery hours: Tuesday to Friday, 10am - 6pm and Saturday, 11am - 5pm

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Notes to Editors:

Solo and Group Exhibitions (Selected)

'Self Portraits', CRG Gallery, New York, USA (2017 solo); 'K²', Marc Selwyn Fine Art, Beverly Hills, USA (2016 solo); '20th Anniversary Exhibition', Hosfelt Gallery, San Francisco, USA (2016); 'TWO X TWO', Dallas, USA (2016); 'Intertwined', The Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, New York, USA (2016); 'The Slow Burn', Ditch Projects, Springfield, USA (2015); 'When the Sun Hits', The Pit, Los Angeles, USA (2015); 'Warp and Weft, Chain Stitch and Pearl: Textiles in the Ahmanson Collection', Fieldsted & Company, Los Angeles, USA (2015); 'Made in LA', Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, USA (2014); 'The Word Today', Supportico Lopez, Berlin, Germany (2014); 'Forêt Intérieure/Interior Forest', 18th Street Arts Center, Santa Monica, CA (2013); 'Womb-Womb Room', Night Gallery, Los Angeles, USA (2012); 'Organic/Synthetic', Glendale College Art Gallery, Glendale, USA (2012).

Channing Hansen is included in the collections of the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Frederick R. Weisman Foundation, Los Angeles; and the Ahmanson Foundation, Los Angeles, among others.