

Daniel Sinsel

14 July – 27 August 2016
1 Davies St London W1
Tuesday – Saturday, 11 – 6pm

In his fifth exhibition at Sadie Coles HQ, Daniel Sinsel presents a new group of works which probe the distinctions between painting and sculpture, flatness and spatial illusion, bodies and objects. Employing materials ranging from the conventional to the rarefied – oil paint on linen, stretched deer skin, glass, coral – Sinsel tests and teases apart their aesthetic and symbolic potential. Throughout his latest sculptures and paintings, a formalist sensitivity to shape, colour and texture comes into play with an instinct for the corporeal.

In the main gallery is a sculpture consisting of two almandine garnets – gemstones with a naturally faceted shape – which Sinsel has enclosed in a brass armature. Filaments of brass enclose each stone, suspending the planar forms within a gilded geometric cradle. The garnets hang in a near-symmetrical pairing, so as to resemble an arcane relic at the same time as evoking something more figurative, even vulnerable – a pair of lungs, testicles, or clenched fists. The sculptural pendant reflects several of the dominant ideas or motifs running through Sinsel's latest works – symmetry, axial composition, covert eroticism, and the fragile line between ornament and organism.



Several paintings adopt a newly expansive scale. In one, Sinsel has woven broad strips of linen into a grid on top of a canvas, giving the work a relief surface akin to tiles. A translucent green ribbon, equivalent in width to the gridded surface of the painting, winds across a black background, appearing to press up against the picture plane, as if locked in battle with the material surface of the work – illusion and flatness forming an antagonistic pair. Sinsel continues to deploy the meticulous illusionism that has defined his practice, and yet the concept of surface – both the physical base of the painting, and the undiluted, pigment-rich paint – is brought to the fore. The impression of space has become tighter and sparser than in his previous trompe l'oeil works – at once more compressed and more ambiguous.

Occasionally, space condenses almost to the point of imperceptibility. In a smaller work, painted on a rhombus-shaped canvas, a fluid ribbon recalls a succession of earlier works in which Sinsel has depicted weightless, unravelling bands. Here, however, the fabric appears to have shredded – its winding volume broken into airborne fragments. In another large scale painting, circular forms float on either side of a centreline or 'spine': spatial illusion is again minimized, yet not entirely expunged. Sinsel introduces a subtle impression of depth through an alternation between crisp and hazy outlines, and through the distortion of circles into glancing ellipses. At the centre of the painting, two white orbs – echoing the suspended gemstones – have been studded with small nodules of pink coral, evoking nipples in defiance of the 'pure' abstraction which the shapes initially suggest. Elsewhere, concepts of surface and pattern are explored through an accumulation of pressed leaves which are naturally riddled with holes: organic matter is woven into a decorative system of perforations and silhouettes.

Sinsel's interest in surface is made visceral and literal in two works which use deer skin – commonly used for drums – as a painterly support. Shaped in the style of a canvas, the skin is marked with Bistre ink or embedded with glass motifs which both punctuate and puncture the translucent membrane. The physical act of weaving, applying or implanting materials into the surface of the work, entails an 'embedding' of meaning: each skin becomes a proxy body, marked and exposed.

Daniel Sinsel (b. 1976, Germany) lives and works in London. He studied at Chelsea College of Art and Design and the Royal College of Art, London. He has exhibited internationally and his work is currently included in *British Art Show 8*, Inverleith House, Edinburgh, travelling to multiple UK venues (2016-2017). Recent exhibitions include *Making & Unmaking*, curated by Duro Olowu, Camden Arts Centre, London (2016); *MIRRORCITY: 23 London Artists*, Hayward Gallery, London (2014); *Somewhat Abstract: Selections from the Arts Council Collection*, Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham, UK (2014); *Jerwood Contemporary Painters*, Jerwood Space, London (2010); *Compass in Hand: Selections from the Judith Rothschild Foundation Collection of Contemporary Drawing*, Museum of Modern Art, New York (2009); *Beck's Futures*, ICA, London (2006). A publication was produced to accompany his solo exhibition at Chisenhale Gallery, London in 2011.

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