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touchy feely | Group exhibition

Nathan Azhderian, Mike Pratt, Just Quist, Florian & Michael Quistrebent,
S.L. Martinez

16 May - 13 June



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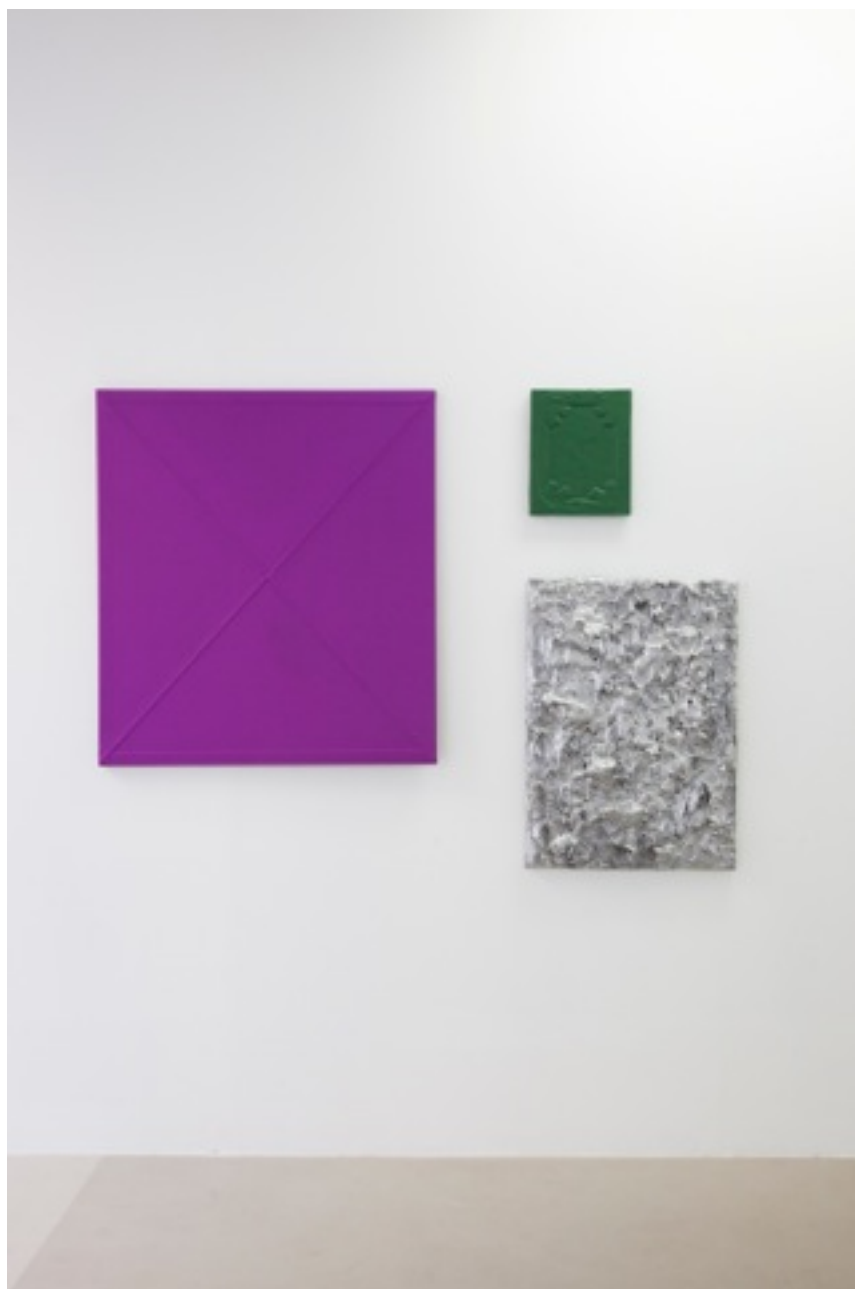
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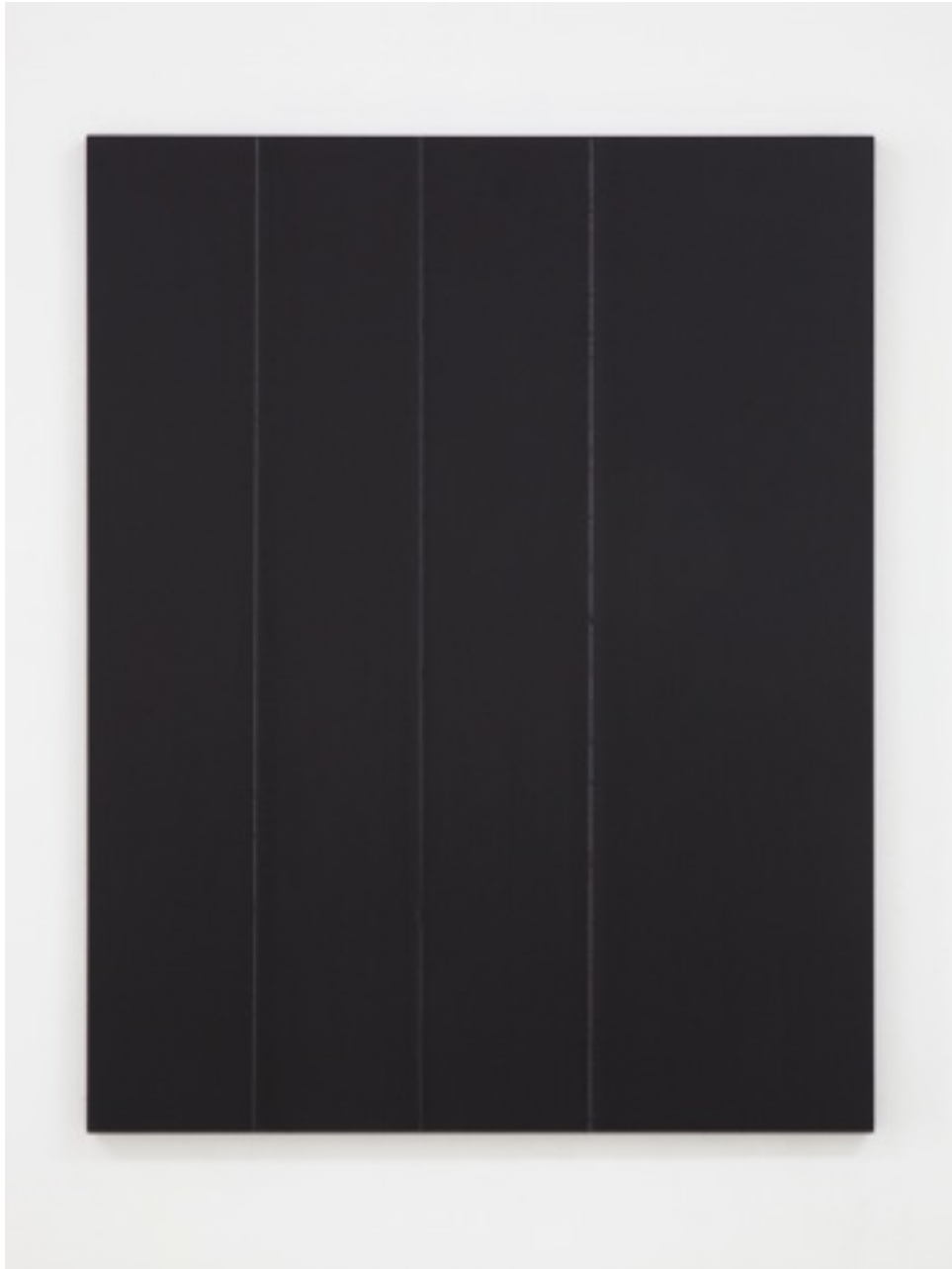
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Nathan Azhderian (1982/US)
Mike Pratt (1987/UK)
Florian & Michael Quistrebort (1982, 1976/FR)
Just Quist (1965/NL)
S.L Martinez (1954/GI)

touchy-feely ('tʌtʃɪ'fi:lɪ)
adj

1. openly displaying one's emotions and affections 'touchy-'feeliness

touchy feely is an exhibition about the visual and sensual attractiveness expressed on the flat surface by six contemporary male artists. The group exhibition displays a range of art works with a strong allure, evoking a feeling of wanting to be touched groped or even scratched.

An exhibition at the MAC/VAL Musee d'Art Contemporain in the outskirts of Paris, currently on view, questions and represents masculinity in the 21st century. The works exhibited offer new ways of thinking about the male artist and the masculine presence in contemporary art and society, giving a broader perspective on gender roles.

The show at gallery Juliette Jongma brings to light similar concerns. The ongoing search for new ways of manifesting on the flat surface, results in bold gestures mixed with fragile endings.

Overlight Chrome 4 by Florian & Michael Quistrebort reflects this contrasting energy with materialistic heaviness, shine and fragility. Confronting the viewer with a conspicuous presentation of luminous silver chrome paint and bright white led lights. The choice of materials used in the works, such as car-paint and pigments, provokes thoughts about the meaning of the skin of painting, in a culture where the skin or surface has grown to a primary locus for temptation - the flimsy place where the erotic manifests.

The perfectionistic strivings of Just Quist's new Transpire Series are emphasized by soft color patterns and fixed figures, suggesting almost designerly elements into his work. This series introduces works with sharp silhouettes, that are both expressive and controlled at the same time. The artist often uses the parabola figure, drawn from mathematics. All made out of different materials (from modeling paste to polyester) and colors, these art works show a matt, creamy, hard or soft surface.

Nathan Azhderian questions or slightly mimics the art world when he takes a rose as the main character of his art work. Memories of Valentines-Day assembled with a shade of International Klein Blue bring a sense of contrast. Azhderian highly pleases our visual senses with broken mirrors, hot pink colors and a shiny finishing. The artist is attracted to familiar materials, such as aluminium foil or polyester, by emphasizing the cheap sentiment of these materials, his works are strongly appealing to our emotions.

Mike Pratt takes on a narrative approach in his art work, through the making of wax moulds of round garden tables. The shape is reminiscent of

ancient greek Tondi, circular paintings that later attracted renaissance painters like Botticelli and Michelangelo as well. Pratt's Tondi interpretations are big round abstract surfaces which turn more pragmatic when realistic objects, like grapes, appear in the décor. His works are, despite their layers and broad connotations, frank and simple gestures.

The effort of the painter becomes apparent in the artwork of S.L Martinez when he recreates the structure of the backside of the canvas. He carefully carves the shapes on the underlayment with thick carbon paper, which he densely paints in soft and pastel colors, metamorphosing the canvas- construction into the subject. The color shades derive a particular sensitivity in the works, that conflict with the thick, sculptural layers of paint, tempting the viewer to touch.