

KATZ CONTEMPORARY

Conrad Jon Godly
“HELLDUNKEL“

23 March – 14 May 2011
Opening reception, Tuesday 22 March 2011, 6 – 8 pm

Conrad Jon Godly has engaged in the depiction of landscape for quite some time, developing a technique to reduce his painting to a point where it almost turns abstract. The results are expressive monumental mountainscapes in oil on canvas, which are on display in a solo exhibition at KATZ CONTEMPORARY.

The featured works of the “HELLDUNKEL” (bright-dark) series were especially made for the gallery’s premises over the last few months. The artist uses the given space to create scenic atmospheres, drifting from light into dark, utilising the architectural setup of the gallery. The massive mountain ranges simulate a panorama in the room making the viewer feel as though he or she were actually standing in the painted landscape.

Godly is not interested in the realistic depiction of a landscape. He rather intends to translate its development, its power and materiality, its aura into the work and into the room, radically reducing the common means of painting. Meticulously conducted groundwork precedes the creation of the large format oil paintings. Instead of sketching mountain ranges in nature with a pencil, the artist takes pictures with a camera. Back to the studio, Godly then creates small sized drafts in oil on cardboard based on his photographic material. It is only through these rhythmic exercises in painting – every single one is an independent piece – that a certain conduct of work and mood of nature reveals itself. The artist then confers and further develops these onto medium sized or large canvases. His work method is comparable to Japanese calligraphy where each sign is drawn in one single stroke. There are clear instructions on the conduct of the strokes; the way they are carried out, their „raw“ appearance, however, is up to the calligrapher respectively the artist.

In an act of physical strength Godly uses kilos of black and white oil paint in order to model landscapes onto and out of the canvas by concentratedly and dynamically applying, pushing and scratching away paint with a paint brush that is up to 50 cm wide. Colour is understood as material, it emerges from the painting, becomes sculptural, enters the room and influences it. Depending on the exposure of light, the time of day and the position of the viewer, the mood of the painting changes. The counterpart of the dark works are pieces created out of nothing but white paint. The reduction the artist is seeking therefore seems even more absolute, even though we do still see landscapes of mountains and valleys. Silhouettes of materialised paint arise from the canvas casting dark shadows onto white mountain ranges. They shimmer with a slight gloss or seem harsh and threatening.

White and Black, Brightness and Darkness are interlocked and constitute a tone inspired by the atmosphere and language of the book HELL-DUNKEL“ (1994) written by Ingeborg-Bachmann-prize winner Reto Hännys (*1947, Tschappina), who is also a friend of the artist.

Conrad Jon Godly (*1962 in Davos, CH, lives and works in Chur and in Sils im Domleschg, CH) studied in the 1980's by Franz Fedier at the Basel School of Design. After having been a successful photographer for many years, Godly went back to painting and since seven years, he has been dedicating essentially to his art.

In summer 2011, the Museum Residenzgalerie in Salzburg will be showing works by Godly in the group exhibition "ALPEN – Sehnsuchtsort & Bühne".

For picture material and further information please contact the gallery:
Phone +41 44 212 22 00 / info@katzcontemporary.com

Installation views will be available from 25 March 2011

Further events:

GUIDED TOURS / ART LUNCH in the presence of the artist

Friday, 8 April, 12.15 pm

Friday, 6 May 12.15 pm

UPCOMING: Elly Strik "so as we are", 27 May – 23 July 2011

Opening reception: Thursday, 26 May 2011, 6 – 8 pm