

Ian DAVENPORT (space 1)

Coloured Circle Paintings

Exposition from September 10 to October 22, 2005

Vernissage Saturday September 10

The works of Ian Davenport bear witness to a structural and analytic approach to painting. Each piece reveals his inclination to set up investigative procedures leading him to explore the properties of the medium. The use made of colour and paint seeks a sculptural approach to the work; the act of painting is physical and the colour asserts itself as a solid material.

Despite the seductive aspect of the material he uses – an industrial enamel - Davenport attempts to free us from any illusory emotion. His paintings constantly refer back to their mechanical process of creation. The palette is composed of a range of colours varying from pastel pink or electric blue to yellow, purple, or intense red. The use of house paint expresses the refusal of interpretation, and reveals the attachment to the painting as object. In this work, the physical process of the act of painting and the materiality of the paint obstruct the viewer's habitual references and associations.

Our knowledge of the work of Ian Davenport comes from his series' presenting the forms of a circular arc born of two contrasting colours, either pure or subtly nuanced and out of which the artist explores the gravity of the medium; during the first phase, the paint is poured over a board placed on the ground, in a second phase, the board is placed on the vertical for the surplus paint to run off. In 2003 Ian Davenport exhibited, in *The Day Like This* at Tate Britain, a wall covered with different coloured lines achieved by running paint through a syringe from the top to the bottom of the wall.

For his third solo exhibition at the Galerie Xippas, Ian Davenport presents a group of circular paintings in a square format. The paintings are carried out in three phases. First a ground colour is sprayed onto an aluminium or fibreboard panel. Once dry, he pours a second laquer onto the centre of the panel, which spreads out naturally and quickly, forming a circular shape. He then turns the board over to allow the surplus paint to drip off. This action is then repeated with the first colour but stopped just short of the area covered by the first circle thus unleashing a circular form through this game of colours. The control necessary to make these works contrasts with the random nature of his materials. The artist is concerned with chance and this procedure allows him to observe the limitations and transformations of the liquid. Yet Davenport makes a clear distinction concerning the use of the process in his work: "*The process is a tool, it is not the point of the paintings... The point is the richness of the final outcome, which is intertwined with a set of procedures.*"

Ian Davenport was born in 1966 in Kent, Great Britain; he lives and works in London. A graduate of Goldsmiths' College of Art in London in 1988, he was nominated for the Turner Prize in 1991. Since then he has held numerous one-man shows. In 1999, Dundee Contemporary Arts devoted an exhibition to his work; Waddington Galleries has presented his paintings regularly in Great Britain since 1990. In 1996, he took part in the important group exhibition, *Nuevas Abstracciones*, mounted in Spain at the Palacio de Velázquez and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid, at the MACBA in Barcelona, then at the Bielefeld Kunsthalle in Germany. In 1999, he participated in the traveling exhibition, *Examining Pictures*, presented at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London, then at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago and the Armand Hammer Museum in Los Angeles.