

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

6-24 BRITANNIA STREET

LONDON WC1X 9JD

GALLERY HOURS:

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Tue–Sat: 10:00am–6:00pm



The Show is Over

Tuesday, 15 October–Saturday, 30 November 2013

Opening reception: Tuesday, October 15th, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm

There it is. I have shown it to you. It has been done. It is being done. And because it can be done, it will be done.

—Kirk Varnedoe, *Pictures of Nothing*

“The show is over.” Or is it? This exhibition is about abstraction and the end of painting, often proposed but never concluded. Christopher Wool’s statement in paintings, drawings and billboards, taken from Vasily Rozanov’s nineteenth century definition of nihilism, contains sufficient irony to suggest that painting itself, the spectacle that surrounds it, and the ultimate questions it poses about life and death, are never quite over.

The negation of painting emerged in Europe after WWII in Francis Picabia’s last paintings, Lucio Fontana’s punctured and slashed *Concetto spaziale* paintings, Yves Klein’s *Fire-Color* works, and Piero Manzoni’s quest for neutral materiality in the *Achromes*. When first exhibited in 1953, Robert Rauschenberg’s *White Paintings*—monochromatic panel paintings—were unprecedented in their deceptive blankness. These works anticipated diverse interpretations of the neutral picture plane. Gerhard Richter’s paintings of the 1970s in shades of grey project a removed, indifferent power. Richard Serra’s *Left Corner Horizontal* (1977), a dense black expanse of oilstick on linen, produces a physical and spatial void that appears impenetrable.

A shared spirit of negation is evident in the anarchic actions that fueled the urban Punk movement, epitomized by Steven Parrino’s physical attacks on the canvas and Kim Gordon’s evanescent wreaths. In Parrino’s *Untitled* (1992), the anarchist symbol is sprayed in black engine enamel on white vellum. Ed Ruscha’s hermetic painted wordplay reaches cinematic finality with *The End* paintings, begun in the early 1980s. The silhouettes of *Hourglass #4* (1987) and *End* (1993) are set against grey-spectrum horizons that evoke transitions of time and space.

Seeking new ways to negate or efface the picture plane, artists such as Douglas Gordon, Mark Grotjahn, Wade Guyton, Adam McEwen, Albert Oehlen, Richard Prince, and Rudolf Stingel represent sustained challenges to the limits of painting, both real and imagined.

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“The Show is Over” continues the thread of Gagosian exhibitions such as “Imageless Icons: Abstract Thoughts” (2005); “Crash” (2010); and “Malevich and the American Legacy” (2011), which trace art-historical themes from the advent of Modernism to the present.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with an essay by Malcolm Bull.

For further information please contact the gallery at london@gagosian.com or at +44.207.841.9960. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

Please join the conversation with Gagosian Gallery on Twitter (@GagosianLondon) and on Instagram (@gagosiangallery) via the hashtag #ShowisOver.

Artists in Exhibition

Dan Colen
Willem de Kooning
Jeff Elrod
Lucio Fontana
Felix Gonzalez-Torres
Douglas Gordon
Kim Gordon
Mark Grotjahn
Wade Guyton
Gregor Hildebrandt
Neil Jenney
Mike Kelley
Yves Klein
Roy Lichtenstein
Nate Lowman
Piero Manzoni
Brice Marden
Adam McEwen
Albert Oehlen
Steven Parrino
Francis Picabia
Sigmar Polke
Richard Prince
Robert Rauschenberg
Gerhard Richter
Ed Ruscha
Robert Ryman
Richard Serra
Frank Stella
Rudolf Stingel
Blair Thurman
Cy Twombly
Andy Warhol
Christopher Wool
Richard Wright

Image: WADE GUYTON, *Untitled*, 2011, Epson UltraChrome inkjet on linen, 93 x 55 inches (236.2 x 139.7 cm)

Gagosian Gallery was established in 1980 by Larry Gagorian.