GAGOSIAN GALLERY

The Show Is Over

Freire Barnes

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In case you were unaware, painting's been dead for a century – since the birth of photography and film. So it warmed the cockles of my 'art to walk into this museum-scale show featuring 35 internationally renowned artists – all gallantly coming to the maligne
d medium's rescue.

Curator Mark Francis has used painting’s supposed death to create an ode to the age-old process of applying pigment to canvas. All the works seem to cry 'Long Live Painting!'.

Abstraction features heavily ('Untitled Fire-Colour Painting', 1962, by Yves Klein, pictured). Sombre colour-ground experimentations by Richard Serra and Gerhard Richter are juxtaposed with the likes of Robert Rauschenberg’s sublime 'White Painting (Two Panel)' (1951), a pair of canvases painted white which, paradoxically, appear to represent a primed canvas waiting to be painted. There are pop art takes by Roy Lichtenstein, and even pisstakes, like Andy Warhol’s 'Oxidation' (1978), which was made by weeing on to copper. The exhibition ripples along the gallery walls with such vitality that it makes you wonder where the cynicism towards painting came from in the first place. The show is far from over. Freire Barnes

THE BOTTOM LINE Painting is dead. Long live painting.