

Martin Scholten. Reduction – Recomposition – Line

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Martin Scholten's artistic motivation is the visual reduction of the seen, of his environment and ideas into complex, colored networks of lines. In his mind, he says he has always translated pictorial compositions into drawings, reduced, abridged, got to the line and therefore to the point: "In the end, this translation is like a language, a vocabulary that one tries to express".ⁱ

Scholten's paintings develop in serial processes – rhythmic structures and colorful harmonies form the basic patterns of the large acrylic paintings. Colored lines meander over the canvasses like snakes on pale violet, shimmering silver or white backgrounds. These crossing, nearing and parting forms are traces of a dynamic confrontation with the possibilities of painting, with its translation into the dimensions of color and line.

This technique is impressively immediate. The acrylic paint flows directly from the turned bottle. Scholten directs the bottles over the canvas in concentrated movements, letting the colors conquer the surface one after another. The width of the line results only from the size of the opening of the bottle. Only rarely the colors are mixed or worked on: a brush is never used. The immediateness of his technique is reminiscent of the idea of abstract expressionism, which is driven by emotional sensation and spontaneous intuition. Nevertheless, Scholten's labyrinths of lines are not the results of a gestural, spontaneous action, but rather a lyric meditation on harmonies of color and form. Thoroughly, he prepares the "right" mood. Like in an orchestral composition, Scholten first determines the harmony in which a new painting shall ring, and chooses the colors as the protagonists of the orchestra. The painting, i.e. the directing of the bottles over the canvas, proceeds in a slow and concentrated speed. The deliberate process of painting is contrasted by the visual impression of speed and dynamics – a tension out of sparse movement and pictorial ease.

ⁱ In a conversation Mai 10th 2014.