

# MADRID **XF** PROYECTOS arte contemporáneo

## **Günter Umberg**

**April 1<sup>st</sup> – May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

The German artist Günter Umberg has decisively contributed to a new reevaluation of the panel painting in the fine arts. For almost forty years, he has explored new aesthetic territories while experimenting with the effect of color as a dynamic pictorial component. Characteristic for his paintings is the dense surface structure that results from the artist's application of countless layers of pure pigments (powder) softly brushed into and onto dammar resin (binder). The edges of the paintings' wooden support are beveled or rounded in order to increase their physical and spatial presence. While in the early years, the artist still focused on different shades of black, he later on began to appropriate further colors like blue, green, grey and orange.

Umberg likes to intervene in spatial situations in order to make his paintings radiate. For this exhibition at Madrid XF Proyectos, Umberg selected intense and crucial works, created throughout several years. The careful, slightly dislocated placement of the paintings within the gallery room appears like a minimalist intervention that questions the tension-filled relationship between the artwork, the space and the visitor: a sensual but unique experience. Umberg's work in Madrid offers a voyage of self-discovery and holds out the possibility of maintaining faith in the unintermediate power of art.

Known as one of Germany's most committed practitioners of abstraction, Umberg also gained recognition as a curator and theoretician. Together with the American painter Joseph Marioni, he signed the programmatic text *Outside the Cartouche* (1986), a statement on perception that coined the term *radical painting* as a self-referential art. During the 1980's Umberg showed renowned radical abstract positions, like Josef Albers, Brice Marden, Robert Rauschenberg in his private art space in Cologne. Umberg's paintings have been shown at solo and group exhibitions round the world, e.g. at Städelmuseum Frankfurt (1985); PS1, Long Island City (1986); Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden (1991); Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach (1993); Busch-Reisinger Museum, Cambridge (1997); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2000); Haus Konstruktiv, Zürich (2006); Fondation Fernet Branca, Saint Louis (2015).

Born in 1942 in Bonn, Umberg lives and works in Cologne (Germany) and Corberon (France).

Artworks by Günter Umberg are represented in major collections, e.g. : Argauer Kunsthhaus, Aarau; Busch-Reisinger-Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts; FNAC, Paris; Fond municipale d'art contemporain, Genf; Frac Bourgogne, Dijon; MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt/Main; Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble; Musée d'art contemporain, Lyon; Museum gegenstandsfreier Kunst, Otterndorf; Neues Museum Weserburg, Bremen; Le Silo, collection Billarant, Marines, France; Sammlung Goetz, Munich; San Jose Museum of Art, San José, California; Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart; Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe; Staatliches Museum, Schwerin; Städtische Galerie, Würzburg; Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach; Valencia Arte Contemporáneo, Valencia.

Marie-Amélie zu Salm-Salm, Curator