



JOHNNY ABRAHAMS

I AM THE TORTOISE BUT ALSO THE CAT AND THE DOG

15 November – 13 December 2018

Vigo is excited to announce its second solo exhibition with New York based artist, Johnny Abrahams. Known for his mastery of intricate optical geometries, the exhibition is comprised of Abraham's most recent series of paintings, which illustrate his progress towards quietude.

The exhibition is a reflection of the artist's exquisite attention to detail and erudite sense of balance and tension, but also his understanding of commonality. Trawling the Internet, he came across a video of a tortoise chasing a perpetually irritated cat and a confused dog around the front room, captioned '*I am the tortoise, but also the cat and the dog*'. Abrahams considers this a sublime, accidental statement that questions the philosophical truths of being, and reflects a deeper ontological resonance within his practice.

Abraham's earlier optical works employed an intense additive pattern making strategy, which would act to stretch and unsettle the gaze. These were paintings full of the hustle bustle of the city. However, in his fresh oeuvre, he has succeeded in experimenting with a slower more elegant rhythm, a fuller shape and a more formal, minimalist language. Interestingly these new paintings are derived from zooming in on the complicated patterns of these previous optical works, spotlighting fragments of these earlier illusions. By magnifying and subtracting pattern until a composition is rendered, Abrahams reveals an opportunity to celebrate the negative space both equally and simultaneously as a secondary image. The practice has gone from techno to contemplative. Appreciative of his own space, these meditative works more accurately reflect the artist's natural character and speed whilst still satisfying his sense of meticulous work practice.

These slow, still, totemic- almost calligraphic forms fleet between their modernist simplicity and a subtle investigation into the effect of light on perception. The paint is applied with a palette knife, causing ridges to form, effecting the interplay between light and composition and inviting them tentatively in the realm between sculpture and painting. Abrahams is exhibiting works with hues of dark grey and dark blue, alongside those that he considers 'beyond black', slightly slowing and softening the speed at which we read the image. Whilst one cannot help being seduced by the implied movement and sculptural, almost architectural imposition of the composition, these paintings also operate on a subtler level, the softness of blurred reflection following one's movement around the work in a quiet yet elegant fashion. Contemporary yet at the same time archaic and elemental these paintings satiate the desire for a calm contemplation whilst working on a primal visual level.

For more information please contact [info@vigogallery.com](mailto:info@vigogallery.com)

Vigo 21 Dering Street London W1S 1AL

Tel: +44(0)207 4933492

[info@vigogallery.com](mailto:info@vigogallery.com)

#vigogallery