

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mark Francis Calibrate

1 March – 13 April 2013

Reception, Thursday 28 February, 6 – 8 pm

Kerlin Gallery is delighted to present an exhibition of new paintings by Mark Francis.

Over the past thirty years Mark Francis has made paintings of singular optical intensity – powerful, apparently abstract combinations of concentrated patterning and stark colour contrasts that are in fact principally based on what the unaided human eye lacks the power to see. His work draws significantly on discoveries about the form and substance of reality that result from technologically enhanced vision. An enduring fascination, for instance, has been the visual worlds made accessible by the matter-penetrating gaze of electron microscopes: the dark, scattered, interconnecting orbs or the variously taut and slack lines of his paintings have drawn their strange forms from imagery of the miniature universe, the realm of molecular structure and cellular association out of which all life is assembled.

In this new body of work Mark Francis looks outwards, taking as points of pictorial reference the graphic interpretations of data received by radio telescopes as part of astronomers' efforts to chart distant zones of the cosmos. Such scientific advances in the power of perception have for Francis come to present vital challenges – and opportunities – for the practice of painting. Intense, saturated colour is employed in a complex but lyrical layering of fluid, translucent horizontal and vertical bands. The formal balance rests in the delicate interplay between transparency and Francis' recognisable overlying register of hovering forms conveying the artist's fundamental concerns with order and chaos in interconnected systems and networks.

If the grid structures of his paintings suggest continuing alertness to the legacy of artistic modernism – and so to its influential arguments about the specific, limited capacities of painting as a medium – this is a burden of history always understood in relation to the revelatory insights generated by contemporary science.

Mark Francis' solo shows include; Abbot Hall Gallery, UK, 2010; Dublin City Gallery, The Hugh Lane, 2008; City Art Gallery, Manchester, 1995; Mary Boone Gallery, New York, 1997; Maureen Paley, London, 2000 and a highly acclaimed retrospective exhibition at Milton Keynes Gallery, 2000. His work was recently featured in 'New Generation' at the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland and in 'Cream' at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki, 2010. He was included in the much debated exhibition of art from the Saatchi Collection 'Sensation', at the Royal Academy in London and the Brooklyn Academy in New York, and in the touring exhibition 'Absolut Vision: New British Painting in the 1990's'. He is represented in the collections of, amongst others, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, the Tate Gallery, London, the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, the Museum of Modern Art, Miami, The Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, Missouri, and the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery, Dublin.

For further information and visual material, please contact Kirsteen Cairns:
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