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Sterling Ruby

PAINTINGS

24 February – 9 April 2011

Xavier Hufkens is pleased to announce the exhibition of new paintings by Los Angeles based artist Sterling Ruby.

Sterling Ruby's interdisciplinary practice incorporates sculptures, collages, ceramics, paintings and videos, which act as markers and metaphors for the burdens that plague contemporary existence. Of the disparate forms in Ruby's practice, the paintings are the most formally abstract. His large color-field canvases, made entirely with spray paint, contain hallucinogenic and elusive visions, hinting at images, which never quite come into focus. Ruby's paintings translate acts of defacing and demarcation into a kind of painterly transcendence.

Ruby has long been influenced by the sociological implications of urban demarcation, vandalism and the power struggles associated with gang graffiti. He has suggested that layers of tagging, evidence of clashes over territory, eventually turn abstract, ceasing to have a clear order, and in the end losing their original meanings and authority.

The paintings included in this exhibition have a darker palette, Ruby's garish colors are covered with layers of black paint, as if the artist were now engaged in defacing his own works. The shroud-like darkness of these canvases and the white paint drips in the foreground suggest crying or mourning. They seem to push the artist's own level of masking and obfuscation into an outward and emotional manifestation of a very contemporary sadness.

Sterling Ruby (°1972) lives and works in Los Angeles, California, USA. Ruby's solo museum exhibitions include *Supermax*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2008), *CHRON*, Drawing Center, New York (2008) and *Grid Ripper*, Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Bergamo (2008-2009). His recent group exhibitions include *Portugal Arte 10*, Lisbon (2010), *New Photography*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2009), *Dirt on Delight*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2009), and the Moscow Biennial (2007).

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