

## Press Release

Exhibition: Data Capture  
Solo exhibition by Eric Butcher  
Opening: Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015 6-9 pm  
Exhibition dates: 19<sup>th</sup> November to 19<sup>th</sup> December 2015

Patrick Heide Contemporary Art is pleased to announce "Data Capture", a new collaboration with British artist Eric Butcher. In his first solo exhibition at the gallery, Butcher will present recent and new works, spanning from his wall based installations, serial works in oil and graphite to works on paper.

Working primarily with oil paint or graphite suspended in resin, a transparent monochrome is spread across the surface of an aluminium support and then stripped off, using a variety of metal blades drawn across the surface. This procedure is then repeated, slowly building up an accumulation of thin residues. The technique is inspired by abstract painting and the use of the spatula as a tool to spread the paint. The process though is mechanized and more precise, and so are the supports, pulled aluminum panels, strips or rods of different sizes and shapes.

Over the past two decades the painterly process has been distilled to a set of rituals, patterns of behavior, endlessly repeated. A mechanistic performance that evidences an increasingly deterministic approach to the creative act. Significant elements of decision-making are systematized rather than relying on the contingent, intuitive or whimsical. The visual outcome is determined by three factors; the physical characteristics of the support, of the instrument of stripping and the interaction of the above mediated by the artist's hand. Butcher's creative practice is rule governed and reductive yet leaves the pictorial outcome of its composition partly to chance.

Paradoxically, in adopting this quasi-mechanized approach - free of emotion, free of explicit content - a quintessentially human quality emerges. When compared with the perfection of machine production, the limitations and failures of the human hand are writ large. Everything in the painted surface that deviates from a flat, featureless monochrome is predicated upon error or impurity, human or material.

Butcher's installations are sculptural rather than painterly and spread over many meters of walls, up stairways or to the ceiling. Bearing the familiar surface with pulled paint they consist of various geometric forms that seem to be haphazardly spread across the space. Also the series consisting of multiple panels possess a rather object like character. A shifting and fusing of color emerges from panel to panel, at times interspersed with an untouched aluminium surface. The color tones shift as well, in some works from muted to bright and iridescent, in others the progression relates more to brightness or texture as with the almost charted shades of grey in the black and white series executed with graphite.

"Data Capture" will feature a large-scale wall installation stretching along and around a downstairs gallery wall displaying the typical array of shapes and pushed colors. Next to several series in oil and graphite, there will be selected paper works with embossed or cut out shapes inspired by the compositions of the installations. The paintings and installations feed the paper works, which in turn inform the larger works.

Eric Butcher was awarded a Multiple Perspectives Fellowship at the Centre for Art International Research (CAIR), Liverpool School of Art/Liverpool John Moores University and received a grant by the Arts Council England for the national touring exhibition "A Machine Aesthetic". Butcher has exhibited internationally, his work is part of numerous private, public and corporate collections, amongst them The Open University, Milton Keynes and he recently realized a series of installations for Invesco Perpetual, London in 2015.