

GUILLERMO PFAFF



INSIDEOUT AND SPACE PAINTINGS, 2015



GUILLERMO PFAFF

INSIDEOUT AND
SPACE PAINTINGS, 2015

Opposite: Installation view of *Inside-Out*,
Hionas Gallery, October 2014

Notes on the artist

Guillermo Pfaff born 1976 in Barcelona currently lives and works in the city having spent several years away in Berlin from 2002 to 2005 and Madrid in 2010. Barcelona is known more for conceptual art and publishing than for painting, but within this context of possible exclusion Pfaff finds a positive situation, one that allows for engagement with theoretical and political thought without the usual inhibiting strictures of a scene – there is no school or style of painting that dominates Barcelona. A history of clandestine publications during the Spanish Civil War is still significant in Cataluña – it is not only the sensual pictorial achievement of artists such as Miró or Tapies. A second reason that formalism in painting is mostly passed over in the region is that after the end of the Franco era Spain had rejoined quickly with ideas current in international art. Catalan artists that gained international reputations such as Joan Brossa and Perejaume that use writing and image as well as concepts and formalist elements are exceptions. Pfaff is an admirer of both these artists as well as artists exploring text and form from outside the tradition of painting, in particular Leon Golub, Bruce Nauman and Lawrence Weiner. From another direction, a writer that interests Pfaff is Michael Houellebecq, who happens to play himself in the film *L'enlèvement de Michel Houellebecq* (2014), English title *The Kidnapping of Michael Houellebecq*. The painted wooden stretcher bars and linen fabric frequently used by Pfaff can be seen as still themselves whilst also acting as a painting. This doubling, an invention between disciplines and categories, is aimed at discovering something other than a metaphor and is central to Pfaff's approach.

Excess is excluded – there would appear to be no need to complicate a situation that in itself is already actively generating complexity. A lean and unencumbered visually succeeds here in combining both concept and process so that they can reflect and reveal each other. Beginning and ending with materials – stretchers, fabric, bleach, paint – Pfaff uses to the maximum the material qualities that had initially prompted his ideas ahead of any actual construction. Stretcher bars are visible in two series of paintings beginning in 2013. The *Space* paintings have a degree of transparency because of the fineness of the linen and numerous bleached areas. In the *Inside-Out Paintings* stretchers bars are not only visible but also painted with spray enamel before assembling – the color is playful and intuitive rather than systematic or referential. Often the bars are reconfigured as diagonals and added to the expected vertical and horizontal structure of a standard painting frame. In using fabric that allows us to see beyond the surface to the structure beneath enables a view of the whole object, not only the picture plane as would be usual. Nothing is hidden. The image is in fact the painting's physical structure and so can be read as a description of the painting whilst also being the painting itself, like a text – or a kind of internal Ekphrasis – in process.

As much as possible then the paintings are just what they are and do not stand in for things that can be seen elsewhere in the world. As Pfaff says, "Everything in a painting is part of it. Not only brush strokes. Not only the artist's hand." They are simply descriptions as objects – not as simple as it may sound however, as clear it may be. Pfaff approaches his work as a project, not a daily practice, like playing a violin for virtuosity's sake – he thinks, writes, plans and gathers potential materials before then producing when the

opportunity arises to exhibit. The aim is not to accumulate works so much as to respond to a given context when the opportunity arises. Though not expressionistic, Pfaff's paintings evince plenty of surface incident including folds, marks, color and hand written text. Take the artist's own name on the *Inside-Out* paintings and *Space* paintings, or the statement on *I hate jazz* (2010), a work that restates the comment in several different languages without attempting any further transformation. A point being made again, that in the paintings and text works, what we know as talent is just one of several aspects, more importantly the others – materials, historical moment, geographical location, personal circumstance and resources available to the artist – are of equal significance both as subject and influence.

David Rhodes

INSIDEOUT is a series of paintings in which the stretcher bars are colored with enamel and covered with a thin canvas of linen that allows one to see inside the frame

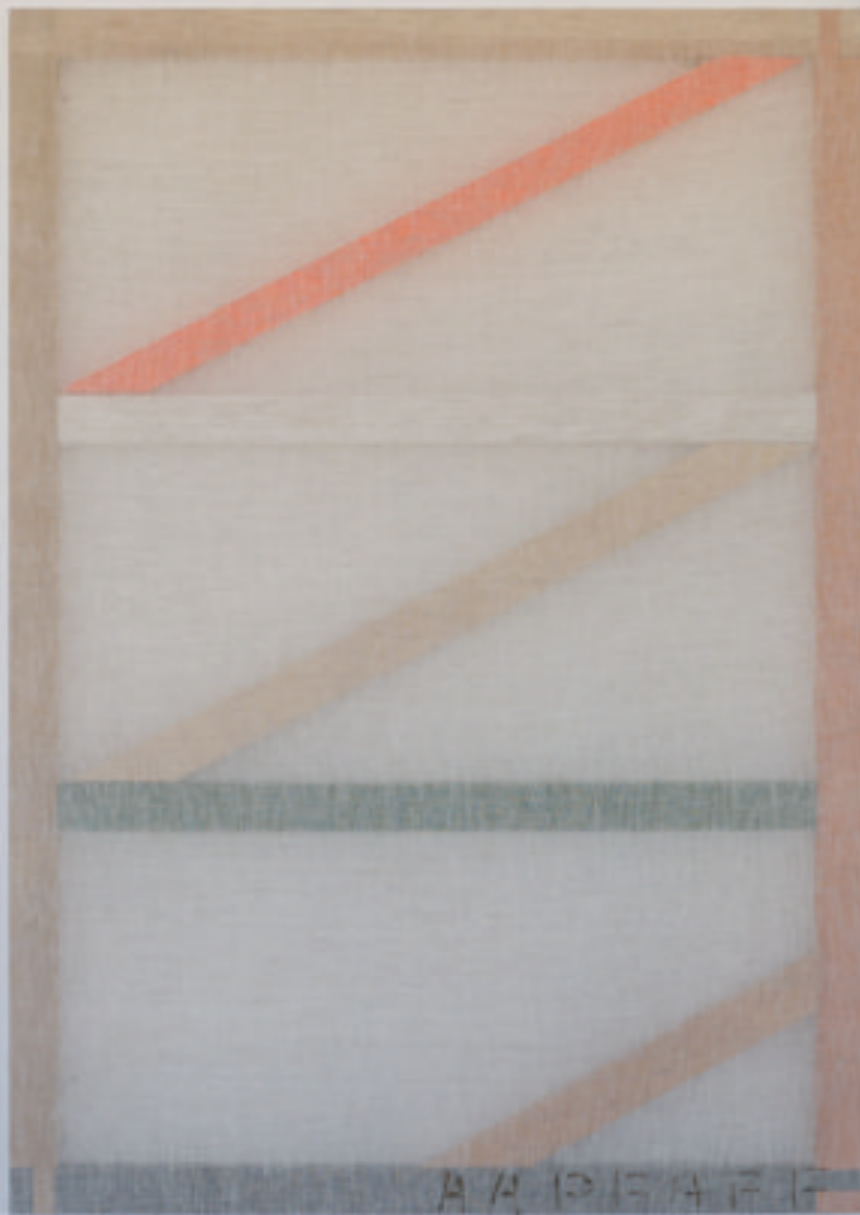
Space is a series of works that with different resources go in search of the volumetric and spatial conception in painting

1

INSIDEOUT, 2015

Linen on enameled frame

46 x 32 in.



AMPLE

2

INSIDEOUT, 2015

Linen on enameled frame

46 x 32 in.



3

INSIDEOUT, 2015

Linen on enameled frame

46 x 32 in.

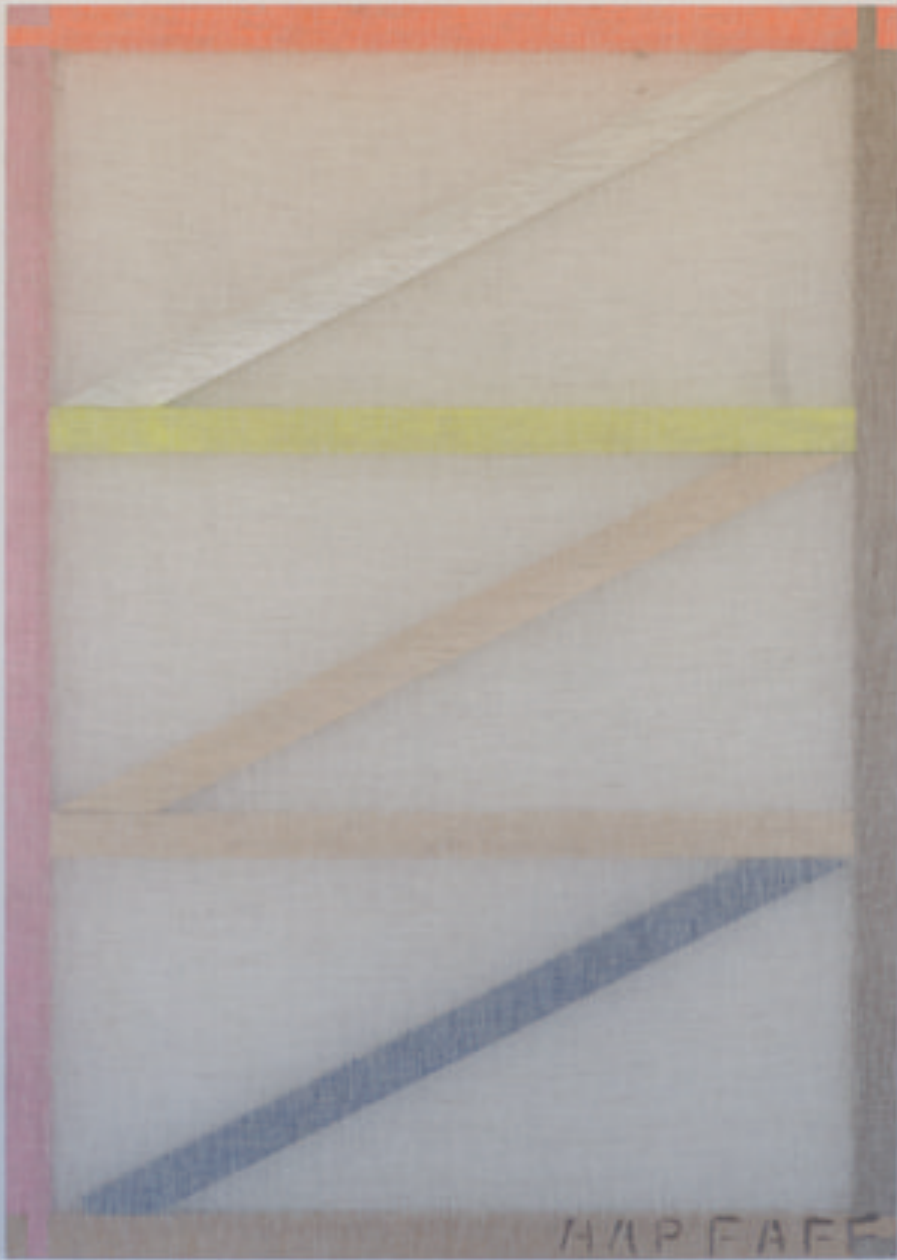


4

INSIDEOUT, 2015

Linen on enameled frame

51 x 36 in.



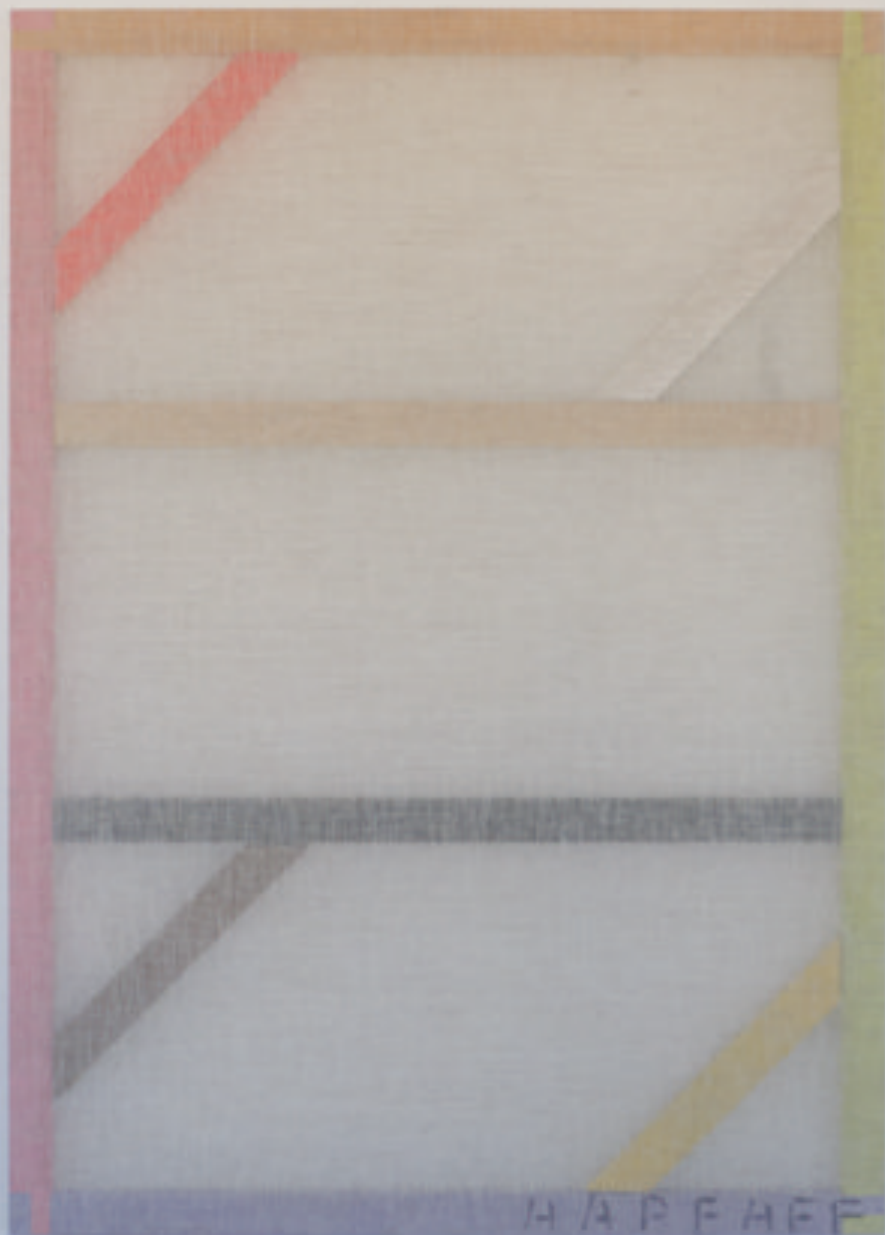
HAPFAFF

5

INSIDEOUT, 2015

Linen on enameled frame

51 x 36 in.



6

Space, 2015

Bleach and oil on canvas

22 x 18 in.



APPEAL

7

Space, 2015
Bleach and oil on canvas
22 x 18 in.



HEAPFAFE

8

Space, 2015

Bleach and oil on canvas

46 x 32 in.



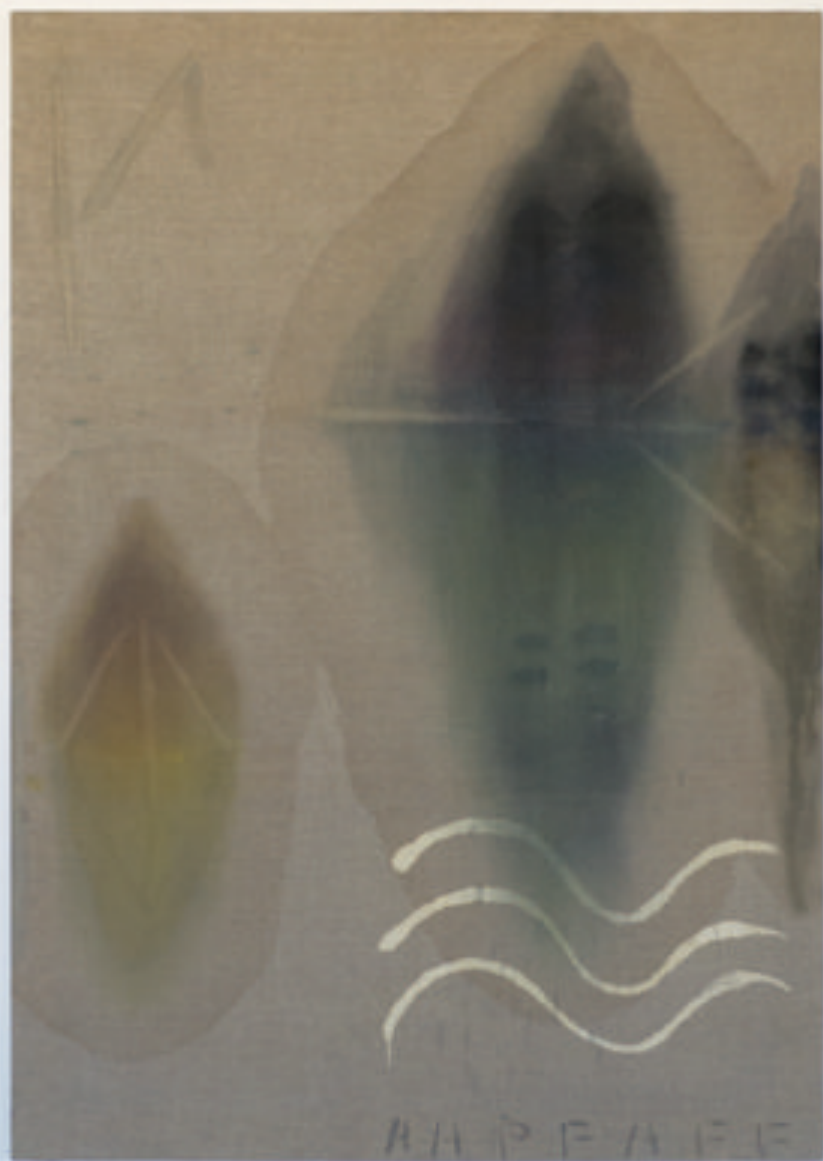
SPACE
APPEAR

9

Space, 2015

Bleach and oil on canvas

46 x 32 in.



10

Space, 2015

Bleach and oil on canvas

22 x 18 in.



Guillermo Pfaff (b.1976, Barcelona) completed his art studies in 1999. Although at the time he worked in various media, painting soon became his most recurrent language. The decision to focus on painting involved a certain degree of self-criticism: the artist conceptualized the pictorial process in search of an approach that suited his circumstances. From 2002 to 2005 he left Spain to live in Paris and then Berlin. He returned to Barcelona the following year and produced a number of works at Hangar, the art production center, establishing links with the Association of Visual Artists of Catalonia (AAVC). In 2009 Pfaff received a grant to become a resident artist at Hangar for two years. He has exhibited in various group and solo exhibitions throughout Spain since 1999. Pfaff held the solo exhibition *Inside-Out* at Hionas Gallery in 2014, his first in the U.S.

AAPFAFF is the artistic project of Guillermo Pfaff. The aim is to reflect the concept of painting and what it should represent in the 21st century.

Guillermo Pfaff
Insideout and Space Paintings, 2015
Catalogue printed on the occasion of
VOLTA NY, March 5 - 8, 2015
Booth C21

Published by Hionas Gallery © 2015
Artwork photos © Guillermo Pfaff
Installation photo © Ania Fedisz
Designed by Justin Wolf

Hionas Gallery
124 Forsyth Street
New York, NY 10002
(646) 559-5906
www.hionasgallery.com



HIONAS GALLERY