

For immediate release

SUZAN FRECON

oil paintings and sun

February 19 – March 28, 2015

Opening reception: Thursday, February 19, 6–8 PM

Press preview with the artist: 10 AM



terre verte, 2014

Oil on linen, in two parts

Overall: 108 x 87 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches (274.3 x 221.9 cm)

Each: 54 x 87 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches (137.2 x 221.9 cm)

David Zwirner is pleased to present an exhibition of paintings by Suzan Frecon, the artist's third solo show at the gallery. On view at 525 West 19th Street in New York will be recent large-scale oil paintings.

For the past four decades, Frecon has become known for abstract oil paintings and watercolors that avoid facile explanations or recognizable visual associations. Instead, composition works with color, with surface, and with light to create an abstract visual reality that she intends to exist solely on its strength as art. In a deliberative and searching process, she works toward painting that provides a complex, powerful, and inexplicable experience for the viewer. As she has stated, "The physical reality and the spiritual content of my paintings are the same."

The exhibition's title, *oil paintings and sun*, conveys Frecon's engagement in her studio practice with natural light, the always-varying subtleties of which she integrates into how the painting is created. The changeable and creative relations of sunlight to color, material, surface, and composition is integral to the painting as ongoing visual experience, capable of being seen in maximum possible dimensions.

From color, Frecon builds a composition rooted in geometric and volumetric proportions and precisely defined spatial relationships that incorporate asymmetry as a generatively unpredictable visual element.

However, at times she will also develop color and composition together,

varying colors and surfaces to achieve often great contrasts of immediacy and radiance. She derives her color palette from pigments ground in oil, particularly earth reds, the resonant vocabulary of which she explores in shifting degrees of matte and sheen, surface and depth, positive and negative. Every decision she makes is toward the greater visual entirety, reworking any element that does not contribute to the dissonant harmony of the whole.

Works in the exhibition include *book of paint*, which incorporates Frecon's concept of paintings having a multidimensional relationship to light, with light coming from behind and within the painting, as opposed to light merely striking the surface in a flat way. The top panel's mysterious shapes, painted in muted and sensitive reddish and yellowish earth pigments, contrasts with the bottom panel, containing an asymmetrical malachite-based arch and an area of lapis lazuli, which, in particular, involves the light at a mineral level, refracting at its core the blue's many possibilities.

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As its title indicates, the composition of another painting, *terre verte*, manifests a distilled orchestration of varying earth greens. At the top is a darkly luminous elliptical-like form; below are proportional sibling shapes that echo and amplify the correspondences between the painting's elements of color, shapes and ground, void and form.

Each of the aforementioned oil paintings measures nine feet (108 inches) in height and consists of two stacked panels (54 inches). All areas of the paintings correspond in proportion to one another, as well as to the overall dimensions of the panels, but Frecon's use of asymmetrical form and the essential inclusion of variable light keep the paintings permeable and transforming. The carefully determined measurements of her canvases are relatively scaled to the human form, and these works notably carry an air of intimacy seemingly counterintuitive to their large size.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue published by David Zwirner Books, featuring an essay by art critic David Cohen.

Suzan Frecon was born in 1941 in Mexico, Pennsylvania. Following a degree in fine arts from the Pennsylvania State University in 1963, she spent three years at the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

Since 2008, her work has been represented by David Zwirner. Previous shows at the gallery in New York include *Suzan Frecon: recent painting* (2010) and *Suzan Frecon: paper* (2013), a large-scale presentation of her works on paper from the past decade, which was presented concurrently with an exhibition of watercolors at Lawrence Markey in San Antonio, Texas.

Frecon has exhibited widely in the United States and internationally. In 2008, her work was the subject of a major solo exhibition, *form, color, illumination: Suzan Frecon painting*, at The Menil Collection in Houston, Texas, which traveled to Kunstmuseum Bern in Switzerland. She has participated in a number of group exhibitions such as the 2000 and 2010 Whitney Biennial.

Permanent collections which hold works by the artist include The Art Institute of Chicago; Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland; The Menil Collection, Houston, Texas; The Morgan Library & Museum, New York; The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. She lives and works in New York.

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