

stéphane dafflon

MAGIC EYE

Exhibition from September 14th to November 3rd, 2018
Opening on Thursday 13th of September from 6 to 9 p.m.
Rue des Sablons 6 & rue des Bains 61, 1205 Geneva

Galerie Xippas is proud to present the second exhibition of the Swiss artist Stéphane Dafflon, who unveils for the occasion *MAGIC EYE*, a collection of original works which will be distributed throughout both spaces of the gallery.

Stéphane Dafflon's paintings seem simple and minimalist at first, but attest to his strong pictorial skills. Initially designed on a computer screen and then copied out onto a canvas or wall, his paintings bear the markings of art history while cementing themselves as works with graphic design influences. They display smooth geometric shapes blended together in a variety of colours whose striking visual magnetism entices the eye. In this instance, the project is based on a colour model limited to blue, red, yellow and black, reminiscent of the CMYK model (cyan, magenta, yellow and black) used in digital printing techniques.

"With a mouse and software programs, he was able to manipulate patterns freely and flexibly. He could take a rectangle, smoothen its edges, cut it up and manipulate it again. He could add colour, turn it this way and that, tilt it, rearrange the scale and the dimension. Shapes could be merged like molecules to form complex graphical objects."

Jeff Rian, *Stéphane Dafflon: Portrait, seven years on (Stéphane Dafflon, un portrait sur sept ans)*, 2007.

The title "Magic Eye" introduces the artistic questions that Stéphane Dafflon puts to the viewer in this exhibition. It refers to a book series of the same name published by N.E. Thing Enterprises. The books feature autostereograms – images made from two-dimensional patterns which, when focusing the eyes, the brain perceives as three-dimensional scenes.

The starting pattern is a basic grid composed of four rectangles, each one with its own hue. The grid becomes a check pattern through a repetition effect achieved by copy and paste. From this grid, every check, diamond, spiral and column pattern comes to life. Patterns and colours echo each other from one

canvas to another, then evolve in their own unique way to form a distinctive pattern, a basic abstraction constructed like a unique visual symbol. This impression is reinforced by the specific proportions of the patterns that endow each painting with a certain volume and depth; it is as though the viewer were walking towards the image and then away from it while wandering from one painting to another in the exhibition area.

The sharp shapes slowly fade, as if scrambled. The patterns transform themselves into vibrating ripples, echoing in the void of their surrounding. Stéphane Dafflon's works are created in situ. They find themselves calibrated onto the contingencies of their given space, adapting themselves in order to coexist with their new environment. Sometimes, a wall fragments the work, and therefore becomes a part of it. Other times, the pieces melt into their surrounding giving a new identity and meaning to the architecture, like a pathway between floor and ceiling.

This is how Stéphane Dafflon's work awakens our senses. As if he, in order to compose and create, uses music and its vibrations. A visual rhythm is generated through the composition of his paintings as well as the way he organizes them in their given space. In fact, it can remind us of Mondrian, and the way jazz music was the true generator of his famous painting *Broadway Boogie Woogie*. The unique experience of Stéphane Dafflon's paintings can also be literally be experienced as a musical composition due to the delicate intercourse of the lines, displaying a rhythm onto the canvas. Incorporating arrangements of diverse patterns into his paintings allows the artist to reaffirm the foundations of abstract art: acting upon the spectator, is like asking him to change his perspective and views of the world.

Stéphane Dafflon was born in 1972 in Neyruz, Switzerland. He lives and works in Geneva. After graduating from the Cantonal School of Art and Design Lausanne (ECAL) in 1999, he started teaching at this same school from 2001. Among his personal exhibitions: *U+25A6* at Plateau FRAC île de France in Paris (2018), *Blue in green*, at Le Le Printemps De Septembre Festival in Toulouse (2018), *TURNOVER* at Galerie Xippas Geneva (2016), at Fri-Art, Fribourg Art Center (2011), *Turnaround* at Mamco in Geneva (2009), *Statik Dancin'* at Frac Aquitaine in France (2007), *Aller-Retour* at Swiss Cultural Center in Paris (2006). He participated in group exhibitions *Building a Collection* at the MBA in Rennes (2018) and *Collectors* at the Kunstmuseum Lucerne (2016). Let's also mention his presence at Art Geneva in 2018, with the Cantonal Fund for Contemporary Art. His works are present in numerous public and private collections: Artothèque de Villeurbanne, National Fund of Contemporary Art - FNAC in Puteaux, FRAC Poitou-Charentes in Angoulême, FRAC Aquitaine in Bordeaux, Frac Ile-de-France in Paris, Fonds d Contemporary Art of the City of Geneva (FMAC), Cantonal Museum of Fine Arts of Lausanne and the Kunsthau Aarau Collection in Switzerland Daimler art collection in Berlin and Daimler art collection in Stuttgart in Germany.