

Alex COUWENBERG

b. 1967, Lives and works in Los Angeles, CA

EDUCATION

1997 MFA, Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, CA

1995 BFA, Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2016 "Left at 69's", Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY

"What We Do Is Secret", Andrea Schwartz Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2015 "Byway," Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, CA

"Revisited," Bruno David Gallery, St. Louis, MO

2014 "California", Jennifer Kostuik Gallery, Vancouver, BC

"Inform / Form", Launch LA, Los Angeles, CA

2013 "Swell," Bruno David Gallery, St. Louis, MO

"Cross Current," Andrea Schwartz Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2012 "Paintings," Jennifer Kostuik Gallery, Vancouver, BC

"Alex Couwenberg & Karl Benjamin: Influence, Divergence, & the Evolution of an Idea,"
(in conjunction with Pacific Standard Time), William Turner Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2011 "New Paintings," Andrea Schwartz Gallery, San Francisco, CA

"Trajectory," David Richard Contemporary, Santa Fe, NM

"New Paintings," Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA

2010 "New Paintings," Markel Fine Arts, New York, NY

2009 "Waimea," Royale Projects, Indian Wells, CA

"Morphic Traces," San Luis Obispo Art Center, San Luis Obispo, CA

"A Bit Left of All Right," William Turner Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

"Singles," Gilman Contemporary, Ketchum, ID

"Arcade," Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA

2008 "Working Space," Bruno David Gallery, St. Louis, MO

"Bypassing Referents," Markel Fine Arts, New York, NY

2007 "Cosmetically, Aesthetically, Unregrettably," d.e.n. Contemporary, Los Angeles, CA

"New Paintings," Gilman Contemporary, Ketchum, ID

"New Paintings," Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA

2006 "New Paintings," Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA

"Black Labeled," Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA

"Alex Couwenberg: a ten year evolution," University Gallery, CSUS, Turlock, CA

2005 "de Stad," Markel Fine Arts, New York, NY

"Metropolitan", Lobby Gallery, San Francisco, CA

"tussenruimte", Ruth Bachofner Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2004 "Primo," Ruth Bachofner Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2003 "Paintings," Gensler, San Francisco, CA

"Paintings; a Seven Year Survey," Riverside Art Museum, Riverside, CA

2002 "New Paintings," Ruth Bachofner Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2001 "New Paintings," Ruth Bachofner Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

1999 "New Paintings," Ruth Bachofner Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

1997 "The Hot Rod Series," East Gallery, Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, CA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2016 "Forethought", Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY

"*Diosyncratic Fields*," East Hawaii Cultural Center, Hilo, HI

2015 "Unlimited Potential", Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY

"Artist of the Film MANA", Villa di Donato, Napoli, Italy

"LA / SF", Andrea Schwartz Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2014 "Selections From The Permanent Collection", Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, CA
"Shift – Five Decades of Contemporary California Painting, Monterey Museum of Art, Monterey, CA
"Celebrating The Spirit of Summer", Lancaster MOAH, Lancaster, CA
"LA Abstract", Red Pipe Gallery, Chinatown, Los Angeles, CA
2013 "Mas Attack 2", Torrance Art Museum, Torrance, CA
"Mana", Gallery MELD, Kailua-Kona, HI
2011 "The Gleam In The Young Bastards Eye", (in conjunction with Pacific Standard Time), William Turner Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
"Chain Letter," Shoshana Wayne Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
"Tel-Art-Phone," Beacon Arts Center, Los Angeles, CA
"A Generous Spirit," Robert and Francis Fullerton Museum of Art, CSUSB, CA
2010 "Karl Benjamin: Under The Influence," Royale Projects, Indian Wells, CA
"Over Paper," Bruno David Gallery, St. Louis, MO
"Line, Curve, Form," David Richard Contemporary, Santa Fe, NM
"Claremont Modernism," OBJCT Gallery, Claremont, CA
"What", Andrea Schwartz Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2009 "The New Irascibles," AC Projects, Pomona, CA
"Rant," Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles, CA
"Los Angeles Currents," Coturier Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
"Enduring Legacy," Claremont Museum of Art, Claremont, CA
"ONA2X2," Cypress College, Cypress, CA
2008 "Liquid Light," Museum of Design Art and Architecture, Culver City, CA
"Between the Lines," William Turner Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
"15 Years, 15 Artists," Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA
"The Finish Fetish," Melissa Morgan Fine Art, Palm Desert, CA
"Keeping It Straight," Riverside Art Museum, Riverside, CA
"Works on Paper," Gilman Contemporary, Ketchum, ID
2007 "West Coast Abstraction," Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA
"Liquid Light," DBA256, Pomona, CA
"Off the Grid," William Turner Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
"Paintings Edge," Riverside Art Museum, Riverside, CA
"Inland Emperors," DBA256, Pomona, CA
Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA
"Decade," Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
"Out of Line," Cal State Stanislaus, University Gallery, Turlock, CA
"Grey Scale," Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA
"Let There Be Light," Phantom Galleries, Los Angeles, CA
2006 "Aligning With Abstract Los Angeles," d.e.n. Contemporary, Los Angeles, CA
"Landscape Perspectives," Art + Industry, Palm Springs, CA
"Summer Abstraction," Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA
"Monotype," d.e.n. Contemporary, Los Angeles, CA
"2nd Gwang Hwa Moon International Arts Festival," Sejong Center, Seoul, Korea
"Flow: Fine Lines on Water," Peter Blake Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA
"Flow: Fine Lines on Water," Lisa Coscino Gallery, Pacific Grove, CA
"Recent Acquisitions," Riverside Art Museum, Riverside, CA
"Out of Line," Parks Exhibition Center, Idyllwild Arts Academy, Idyllwild, CA
2005 "A Common Thread," Soho Myriad, Atlanta, GA
"Out of Line," Riverside Art Museum, Riverside, CA
"Out of Line," Brandstater Gallery, La Sierra University, Riverside, CA
"Abstract Los Angeles", Louisiana Tech University Galleries, Ruston, LA
"Theories: LA Paint," Post, Los Angeles, CA
2004 "Luster," Gensler, San Francisco, CA

"Abstract Work from the Permanent Collection," Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA
 "Abstract Los Angeles," Soho Myriad, Atlanta, GA
 2003 "No Chaser; Straight Ahead Abstract Painting," Post, Los Angeles, CA
 "Black and White," Ruth Bachofner Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
 2002 "California Dream," Il Museo I Magli di Sarezzo, Brescia, Italy
 "Sam Maloof and Friends," dA Center for the Arts, Pomona, CA
 2001 "New American Paintings Group Show," OSP Gallery/Open Studio Press, Boston, MA
 "Homage: Roland Reiss," Claremont Graduate School alumni show, DA Center for the Arts, Pomona, CA
 2000 "Art 2000: Applauding Revolutionary Talent," Millard Sheets Gallery, Pomona, CA
 1998 "Synchronicity," Mt. San Antonio College Art Gallery, Walnut, CA
 "Contemporary Works of the Ruth Bachofner Gallery," Antelope Valley College, Lancaster, CA
 1997 "Convergent Abstraction," Ruth Bachofner Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
 "L.A. Emerging," Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
 "3 Weeks in L.A.," Richard Heller Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
 "Recent Paintings," Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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 Nys Dambrot, Shana, *WhiteHot Magazine*, August 2014
 Enholm, Molly, *ArtScene*, May, 2014
 Roth, David, "Alex Couwenberg @ Andrea Schwartz," *Square Cylinder*, December, 2013
 Senn, Evan, *Crosscurrents*, Andrea Schwartz Gallery, San Francisco, 2013
 Lucas-Zenk, Carolyn, *West Hawaii Today*, July 2013
 Frank, Peter, *Huffington Post*, January 2012
 Moret, A., *Art LTD.*, March 2012
 Frank, Peter, *Fabrik*, January 2012
ArtWeek LA, January 2012
 Carasso, Roberta, *Coast Magazine*, "Colors, Shapes, and Light, October 2011
 Walsh, Daniella, *Riviera Magazine*, Spring 2011
 Davies, Stacy, "OC Weekly", October 2011
 Walters, Danielle, *Beverly Hills Lifestyle*, "Creating Balance", Spring 2011
 Roth, David, *Square Cylinder*, February, 2011
 Yood, James, *Critic, Writer, Art Institute of Chicago*, Catalogue Essay, 2011
California Home and Design, "Left Coast Looks", February, 2011
 Dambrot, Shana Nys, "Flavorpill New York," Alex Couwenberg, "New Paintings," March 2010
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 Zimmermann, Mark, *Art: Theories and Provocations*, March, 2010
 Biller, Steven, *Palm Springs Life*, "Game On: The "Arcade Paintings", November 2009
 Nichols, Kimberly, *Desert Magazine*, "Art For Now", November 2009
 Melrod, George, *Artltd.*, "Under the Radar," May 2009
 Myers, Holly, *Los Angeles Times*, January 30, 2009
 Frank, Peter, "Zen and the Art of Im-perfection, Catalogue Essay, 2008
 Harris, Freddie, *Sun Valley Magazine*, "Gallery Openings," Winter 2008
California Home and Design, "Art and Antiques," September 2008
 Gay, Malcolm, *Riverfront Times*, "St. Louis Art Capsules," May 20, 2008
 Grossman, Emily, *Art and Living*, "The Straight Take", March 20, 2008
The New York Sun, "Brother Culture" January 25, 2008
 Biller, Steven, *Palm Springs Life*, "Critics Pick," January, 2008
 Davies, Stacy, *IE Weekly*, "Everything Old Is New Again," January 17, 2008
 Myers, Holly, *Los Angeles Times*, "Like 50's lounge music, remixed," August 17, 2007

Gleason, Mat, *ArtScene*, July/August 2007
Artdaily.org, July 2007
Tibbitz, Ashley, *Flavorpill*, July 17-23, 2007
ARTltd., "Pulse," July 2007
Bossick, Karen, *Wood River Journal*, "Buzzer, Gilman Contemporary", August 1, 2007
Carasso, Roberta, *Coast Magazine*, September, 2007
Frank, Peter, *LA Weekly*, "Grids Unlocked," Art Pick of the Week, June 6, 2007
Jit Fong Chin, *SqueezeOC*, "Grey Matters", January, 2007
Walsh, Daniella, *Orange County Register*, "Shades of Gray", January 14, 2007
Carasso, Roberta, *Laguna News Post*, "Artwaves" January 4, 2007
Walsh, Daniella, *Riviera Magazine*, "The Radar Art" January, 2007
Rupe, Cynthia, *SqueezeOC*, Picks of the Week, January 4, 2007
Mckenna, John Page, *Palm Springs Life*, Winter/Spring 2007
Daniels, Diana, *Asst. Curator*, Crocker Art Museum, Catalogue Essay, 2007
Melrod, George, *Art Ltd.*, "Culver City: Chelsea West?" October, 2006
Cripps, Mick, *Lifescapes*, "Artist Profile," September, 2006
Allen, Bobbie, *Coastline Pilot*, "Seven Abstractionists for summer," July 6, 2006
Frank, Peter, *LA Weekly*, "Art Pick of the Week," October 2005
Muckenfuss, Mark, *Press Enterprise*, Riverside Museum Monothon Event, September, 2005
Simou, Alexandra, *New York Sun*, January 26, 2005
Kugelman, Kerry, *Art Circles*, fall 2004
Cullum, Jerry, *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, Review, August 29, 2004
Gilbert, Debora, *Greenline*, March, 2004
Gleason, Mat, *Artscene*, February, 2004
Frank, Peter, *LA Weekly*, "Art pick of the week," February, 2004
Novick, La Rue, *Daily Bulletin*, February, 2004
Litz, Paige, *Los Angeles Times*, "Going Beneath the Surface," October 10, 2003
Moyle, Andrew, *210 Magazine*, October, 2003
Nelson, Harold, *Director*, Long Beach Museum of Art, Catalogue Essay, 2002
Alfred, E. Anne, *Asst. Director*, Riverside Museum of Art, Catalogue Essay, 2002
Dennison, Lisa, *New American Paintings*, vol. 37, 2001-02
Roth, Charlene, *Artweek*, "Alexander Couwenberg at Ruth Bachofner Gallery," March, 2001
Frank, Peter, *LA Weekly*, "Art pick of the week," January, 2001

SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, CA
California State University, Stanislaus, Turlock, CA
Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA
Daum Museum of Contemporary Art, Sedalia, MO
Fidelity Investments, Boston, MA
Georgia Tech University, Atlanta, GA
Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, CA
Lancaster Museum of Art and History, Lancaster, CA
Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA
Pitzer College, Claremont, CA
Pomona College, Claremont, CA
Riverside Art Museum, Riverside, CA
Robert and Francis Fullerton Museum of Art, California State University San Bernardino, CA
University of La Verne, La Verne, CA

VISITING ARTISTS / LECTURES

Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, CA
Donkey Mill Art Center, Holualoa, HI
Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, CA
California State University Northridge, Northridge, CA
Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO
Honolulu Museum of Art, Honolulu, HI

Paintings Edge, Idyllwild Arts Academy, Idyllwild, CA
Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA
Riverside Art Museum, Riverside, CA
Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA
California State University Stanislaus, Turlock, CA
Summer Arts, California State University Northridge, Monterey, CA
Idyllwild Arts Academy, Idyllwild, CA

AWARDS

2007 Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant

PRESS

Alex Couwenberg in the Next Dimension by Shana Nys Dambrot, 2016

Unless your work gives you trouble, it is no good. – Pablo Picasso

Alex Couwenberg is an imperfectionist in the house of precision, a humanist in the realm of instruments. His handmade hard-edge abstraction privileges the physicality of

the artistic process and the scars left by the creativist gesture, within an aesthetic tradition that eschews both. This upsets some people. He's okay with that. His radial, vectorized colour blocking and interpretive mathematics are tethered to Southern California art history in

certain salient and well-analysed ways. But in speaking to the contemporary zeitgeist, Couwenberg expresses himself by combining several kinds of styles and techniques in singular compositions that transcend those Mid-Century foundations to create edifices of today's visual plurality. Confronting his works, one takes an automatic optical inventory of their variegated, topographical textures; you can feel yourself seeing, noticing

that the act of sight is physical not just informational. This is intellectually rigorous work speaking a language of intuition – or perhaps it's the other way around.

Couwenberg's sunny, tertiary, largely earthbound palette also disengages from the Pop and Op Art traditions at the edges of his personal style. As his line work evokes painting studios rather than sites of commercial or industrial design, so too do his nuanced, Ombre colour profiles operate with an emotional eccentricity and expressively individual declaration – rich yolk, penumbrous blue, slate grey, freckle-free eggshell, salty olive, oxblood, ice, tangerine dream, crude-oil black, bandage-coloured flesh, royal teal, copper, violet, sherbet, moss and mica.

This already compelling range of chromatic and linear tonalities, laid down in translucent layers like tissue-paper stained-glass in patchworks of recombinant colour, simultaneously delineates shapes in organized compositions with the centers of gravity of still-lives or classical tableaux. This has been true throughout his practice and especially between 2007-2015. But Couwenberg in the early months of 2016 has already made a marked breakthrough, offering a new dimension of engagement with the perspectival sight-lines of pictorial space, a methodology of architectural origami and machine-aged naturalism now happening across the planes of the painted multiverse. It's as different as a map from a globe, as typography from Braille.

If dimensional space and modelled rendering help differentiate between a medieval vision and the Renaissance naturalisms, then perspective and momentum make the difference between retro and futuristic modernisms in the same way. Taking the core dynamic of the image from schematic to atmospheric, disrupting the instinct for reading right to left with refractive vector-based optical depth. There's no single vanishing point to get sucked into but rather a plane to linger over with different perspectives and focal points. One thinks about string theory and the invisible pockets of nested universes. One thinks about broken kaleidoscopes and the disorientation of an aerial landscape. One imagines drawing a street view, lining up the partly-lit windows in upper stories, vaguely aware of the existences of some occupants. One feels the air inside spaces that not only the eye, but the body of the viewer might now occupy.

Disrupting the flatness of the pattern, hinting at digital imaging technology or the analogue pixilation of lens flare, works like *Maybe Tomorrow* evoke Bernard Tschumi's plan for Parc La Villette; *Space Oddity* looks like the aspirational, heroic exterior of Star Fleet Academy; *ThruXton* is every inch a city block at night, or the old Whitney Museum; *Looking for a Kiss* looks like the new Whitney; *Provocateur* has a pulse, it breathes with a perceptible rhythm; *Stylus* is geological and ancient, mythological and possibly a mirage. Couwenberg's sensibility is radial, botanical, musical, percussive, and syncopated, with a patois of satellite imaging, pressurized marquetry, and the romantic labor of grave-rubbing . It's a fractal kind of naturalism, emotional rather than ideological, yet formalist rather than spiritual.

With the asymmetrical balance of *Ikebana*, the organic world is run through the filter of the intellect. Couwenberg's work certainly gives him trouble, but perfection is not the goal. It's something better than perfection, because it has a story.

--Shana Nys Dambrot



Puka, 2016, Acrylic on canvas, 18 x 16 inches