

Anton Kern Gallery

Chris Martin

For Immediate Release

WINDOW

91 Walker Street
New York, NY

(corner of Walker and Lafayette Street)

September 16 - October 31, 2020

On the Walker Street vitrine of WINDOW are two “eccentric stretcher” paintings by Chris Martin. This body of work, all made in 2006, has never before been exhibited. The paintings are acrylic, flashe, and spray paint on canvas, stretched over these eccentric stretchers--the form of the stretcher dictating the structure of the painting. “They’re kind of savage,” Martin notes, with aggressively (and simultaneously joyful) bright paint and wild shapes. This group of paintings was an attempt to push and break through the formal parameters of painting. In a sense they are also related to a graffiti aesthetic--with the spray painted dots that punctuate the paintings making a clear reference and homage. The eccentric stretchers also harken back to the eccentric abstraction of the 70s--artists such as Ron Gorchov, John Torreano--kings of the scene who were the teachers of a young Martin.



Installation view

The painting on the right’s title is written on the lower left hand of the canvas, noting that it was dedicated to the memory of three men: Raul, Raymond, and Carlos. These were some of Martin’s most memorable assignments when he worked with HIV patients in Red Hook in the 90s. The painting’s display for the first time stirs fond recollections of their antics but also, with gravity, the indignities these strong men faced as the disease ravaged their bodies, as well as the sensitive nature of using their names on the work (a taboo at the time he knew them, as any revelation of an HIV diagnosis had the potential to ruin reputations and lives).

On the Lafayette side of WINDOW is a neon light box painting, first displayed back in 2014 on the outside of the old 20th Street location during Martin’s inaugural exhibition with the gallery. The use of light boxes to display his paintings was inspired by Mexican devotional images, where icons and religious figures are placed in brightly lit displays. Here, one of Martin’s seven point structures is illuminated--a riff on early geometric modernism but with a contemporary electric pink color.

We invite you to see these three works anytime, day or night, WINDOW is on view 24/7.

Gallery Hours

Tuesday through Saturday
10am – 6pm

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