

PRESS RELEASE

P. STRUYCKEN

Entoptical perception

Reflections on ... Explosante-Fixe... by Pierre Boulez

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The gallery opens this season with a new series of wallcoverings by P. Struycken. Measuring 270 x 165 cm, the tapestries are a homage to contemporary French composer Pierre Boulez. They present a spectacular range of colour spaces inspired by the composition....Explosante-Fixe..... of 1971-93.

The works offer a visual impression of the acoustic opulence and complexity of the Boulez piece. The layering and alternating colours set off against a highly structured and complex design are aspects that, at a certain abstract level, lend themselves to visualization while avoiding being a whole or partial illustration of the composition. The figuration in the tapestries derives from an emotional connection with the effects of the piece, rather than a rational analysis of it.

To represent the alternating structure of sound relations in the music, Struycken opted for interchanging visual colour dynamics. Like the music, the detailing discernible in the visual work can be experienced as vibrant, successive, overlapping strata the confines and variable extensions of which result from changes in the underlying structure. This generates form by changes in perceivable sound and colour relationships and not by a combination of figures or arrangements set in advance.

Struycken's works conjure up shimmering, mellifluous images that seem almost in movement, and come close to 'entoptic perception': the floating shapes and colours produced by residual stimuli from nerves behind the eye, which we see when our eyes are closed. It is also a perception that is typified by perpetual shifts and changes in layers of colour that have boundless detailing and subtleties.

Since 2004, Struycken has been working on a project, commissioned by the Pierre Boulez Foundation, to create a dynamic visual interpretation of the composition....explosante-fixe..... The piece is a computer generated visual version that, in contrast to the tapestries, follows the composition's musical developments with great precision. The combined sound and image version will be presented at the

2006 Holland Festival and as a three-channel projection in 2007 in a large-scale 3-D installation with multiple projections in the Groninger Museum.

Like the last series we presented in 2003, the tapestries were produced in the Textile Museum, Tilburg, on a computer-controlled Jacquard loom. For the new pieces, Struycken developed a palette of 256 colours on the loom. He then used them to structure his colour spaces, of which the tapestries are cross-sections. The previous tapestries had a palette of 28 colours. Struycken succeeded in expanding the range of colours by alternating white and black, as opposed to simply white, warp thread (coloured chain) and by weaving with 8 weft colours rather than 6. 8-shank satin binding and double cloth was used. Every binding (in other words, every colour) consists of a combination of four weft colours.

P.Struycken is interested in the composition of colours. Specifically, in the commonalities and anomalies between colours, rather than combinations of selected separate colours. For him, the relationship between colours is more important than the colours themselves. His growing conviction is that the experience of a limited number of colours (a colourist unit), such as in an artwork or architectural application, derives from the natural interrelationship of colours and can be traced back to general experiential givens. His interest in the history of ideas on colour, perception, interpretation and their valuation help to bolster and develop his conviction.

Over the years, Struycken has developed a unique working method in which he examines the endless combinations, subtleties and transformations of colour without any predefined value or meaning. The luxuriance and chameleon-like power of colour is at the heart of Struycken's artistic quest.