

## Adam Pendleton

### *These Gestures Towards You*

First Floor, 41 Dover Street, London W1S 4NS

27 February – 13 April 2024

Opening: Tuesday, 27 February, 6 – 8 pm

*'For me, abstraction is not to replicate the known, but rather to give opportunity for the unknown, for the unimagined, for the unrealised.'*<sup>1</sup>

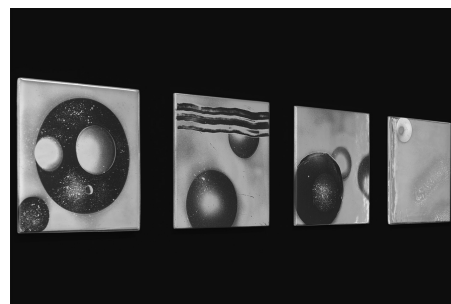
Adam Pendleton

Galerie Max Hetzler, London is pleased to present *These Gestures Towards You*, a solo exhibition of new works by **Adam Pendleton**. This is the artist's third solo presentation with the gallery, and the first in the London space.

Drawing on notions of abstraction, translation and transference, the exhibition positions a single work composed of 45 ceramic paintings in dialogue with five of Pendleton's large-scale drawings. So-termed for their painterly character, the ceramics are presented against a black-painted wall in an ostensibly linear formation. Circle motifs, brush-like strokes and drips are all executed with ceramic glazes and overlaid atop a fired metallic and reflective silver ground. Rendered on an intimate scale, each ceramic painting is at once multifarious, individual, unique – and part of a greater whole.

The selection of drawings belongs to the artist's ongoing body of work, *Untitled (days for drawing)*. In these compositions, Pendleton engenders a language of abstracted form and gestural experimentation. Constellations of spray-painted circles or loosely painted squares converge with improvised marks, fluid geometries and rapidly executed lines. Conveying different frequencies of speed, the compositions move both horizontally and vertically across the expanse of white paper. The rendering of depth in these drawings is complicated by shadowy echoes of the multiple layers of each work, which seem to shift in and out of focus. The anti-linear progression from one piece to the next is evocative of the arbitrary movement of molecules. Establishing a polyrhythmic space, these sometimes dense and delicate moments have been referred to by the artist as a 'visual orchestra'.

The ceramic paintings and drawings alike offer explorations into what Pendleton has termed 'the alchemy of painting'. In these works, the circle motif – a central feature of the artist's recent practice – undergoes a process of translation between different media. Appearing initially in the *Untitled (days for drawing)* works, the biomorphic shapes



Adam Pendleton  
*45 Gestures Towards You* (detail), 2024  
glazed ceramics, 45 parts  
each: 22.8 x 22.8 x 0.6 cm.; 9 x 9 x 1/4 in.

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<sup>1</sup> A. Pendleton, 'A brush with... Adam Pendleton', Podcast by *The Art Newspaper*, August 2022.

are then transposed across multiple iterations onto the ceramic paintings, through which slight variations and diversions occur. The kiln itself stands as another mediator, transforming the running glaze of the ceramics into the hard crystalline shell of their final formation. What is lost – as much as gained – enables manifold points of entry from which to address the core conceptual facets of the exhibition. Marked with the myriad gestures of their conception, the works are thus caught in a liminal state between process and material, fragmentation and unity, creation and negation.

Adam Pendleton's work is a reflection of how we increasingly move through the world on a sensorial level. It is a form of abstraction that, in its painterly, psychic and verbal expression, announces a new mode of visual composition for the twenty-first century, and investigates Blackness as a colour, a method and a political subject – in short, as a multitude. His work also poses questions about the legacy of modernism in the present day, reactivating ideas from historic avant-gardes across mediums and moments in time. Since 2008, he has articulated much of his work through the framework of Black Dada, an evolving enquiry into the relationship between Blackness and abstraction. It's a visual and structural philosophy that confounds distinctions between legibility and illegibility, past and present, familiar and strange, reminding us that meaning always develops through differences and similarities alike.

This philosophy extends to Pendleton's solo exhibitions. He approaches each space not just as a container for his work but also as a literalisation of it. In museum exhibitions like *Who Is Queen?* (MoMA, New York) or *Blackness, White, and Light* (mumok, Vienna), his painted compositions inspire a structural intervention that physically implicates us, rearranging our perceptions and encouraging us to approach the work on our own terms.

**Adam Pendleton** (\*1984, Richmond, VA) is based in Brooklyn, New York. His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at notable museums including the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum in St. Louis; mumok – Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien (both 2023–2024); The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (2022); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2021–2022); Le Consortium, Dijon (2020); and the KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2017). His work has also been featured in the Whitney Biennial (2022); the Venice Biennale (2015); and other prominent group exhibitions including *Grief and Grievance: Art and Mourning in America* at the New Museum, New York (2021).

Further exhibitions and events

Berlin:

23 February – 6 April 2024

*The Code Factory*

Works from the Eighties and Nineties  
Günther Förg, Katharina Grosse, Hans Hartung, Georg Herold,  
Albert Oehlen, Sean Scully, Thomas Struth  
Potsdamer Straße 77-87, 10785

7 March – 13 April 2024

**Barry Flanagan**

*Sculpture is always going on*

Bleibtreustraße 45 & 15/16 10623

7 March – 28 April 2024

**Tal R**

*Rosa See*

Goethestraße 2/3, 10623

Paris:

2 March – 6 April 2024

*On Paper*

Giulia Andreani, Louise Bonnet, André Butzer, Carroll Dunham,  
Ida Ekblad, Barry Flanagan, Günther Förg, Katharina Grosse,  
Mark Grotjahn, Jake Longstreth, Victor Man, Danielle Mckinney,  
Albert Oehlen, Adam Pendleton, Richard Prince, Eleanor Swordy,  
Tursic & Mille, Rinus Van de Velde, Grace Weaver  
46 & 57, rue du Temple, 75004

Marfa:

9 May – 8 December 2024

**Katharina Grosse**

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