

Josh SPERLING

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JOSH SPERLING

SO IT GOES

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Josh Sperling, So It Goes B, 2019, photo by Guillaume Ziccarelli, courtesy of the artist and Perrotin.

Josh Sperling has created a series of new works for his fourth exhibition, with the gallery “So It Goes.” Blurring the line between painting and sculpture, the artist creates pop minimalist confections in bright colors and geometries. Sperling’s paintings—made with power tools and skills in engineering, graphic design, and woodworking—have a lot in common with sculpture. His play with scale, color, and shape is meant to evoke emotion and mood, as well as interact directly with the specific space in which it is shown.

For more information, visit whitewall.art

JOSH SPERLING EXPERIMENTS WITH WEAVING AT PERROTIN

By Katy Donoghue

Josh Sperling's "So it Goes" is on view at Perrotin in Paris through December 21, 2019. The artist has been quite busy as of late—the show is his sixth solo exhibition in just the past year. Always looking for mediums and techniques to include in his practice, Sperling is showing new monochrome pieces, including an immersive all-black work, as well as an entirely new series of woven works. The artist shares with *Whitewaller* how he hopes to engage viewers at an active level.

WHITEWALLER: Can you tell us about the starting point for this new body of work?

JOSH SPERLING: My work is divided into two primary series that serve as a vocabulary for my practice: monochromes and composites—monochromes being a single color or single shape, composites being a compilation of multiple monochromes into one work. With each new body of work, I expand that essential vocabulary and build on it. This upcoming exhibition in Paris became an opportunity to test the limits of already established forms, notably monochromes, as well as begin an entirely new series of woven works, which is a technique that I began to experiment with when I was working on my show in Brussels.

WW: How did you want the works to interact with the gallery space in Paris?

JS: Absolutely, site-specificity is central to my practice. The woven works will be large-scale, matching the height of each wall. And then completely immersive, the squiggle installation is designed to take over the entire room, down to the inch. When you manipulate the scale—forcing viewers to take a step back or a gaze downward—the experience of viewing work becomes active. It becomes physical.

WW: The making of your paintings is related to the making of sculpture. What do you enjoy about that process—using skills like graphic design, engineering, and woodworking?

JS: I grew up in a rural town called Oneonta, New York, and there was very little access to contemporary art. In the beginning, I learned how to craft furniture. Today, the production of my paintings has at times more in common with furniture than it does with traditional painting. I begin by designing digital tiered forms that are then physically cut from plywood with a CNC router. When the forms are finished, canvas is stretched over the plywood, and, finally, paint is applied. The new series of woven works has proven particularly challenging to design, because the curve of each circular sculpture must be exactly precise in order to form a full circle.

WW: Can you tell us about your choice in color for this show, as your paintings usually start out as black-and-white drawings on a computer?

JS: Color is the last step in my process. I always use hand-mixed pigment, which I keep track of in multiple encyclopedic books in my studio. Each entry acts as a recipe, and it becomes a living document for ingredients, experiments, and outcomes. My work, up until now, has used color as a strategy for immersion, focusing especially on hyper-vivid hues. In this show, however, black will be a dominant color. It's reductive rather than additive, forcing the structure of each piece to come to the fore.



Portrait by Claire Dorn.

