

ROBERTS & TILTON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 16, 2016

Egan Frantz
The Oat Paintings
January 14 – February 18, 2017
Opening Reception: January 14th, 6–8pm

I met Egan Frantz at the Independent Art Fair. I introduced myself as a fan of his and Liz Wendelbo's picks for Ubu web, which included Kurt Kren and Xenakis. From the get go I identified as the beggar with my hand out (like Brancusi to his patrons). I was drinking at the time and couldn't afford the pricey art fair drinks and he got me a beer. He made a series of toilet paper paintings and eggshell sculptures. The literary reference interested me as we talked about Broodthaers. As I write this, I am once again the beggar claiming my month's rent in exchange for this press release: three hundred thirty seven dollars.

He would eventually end up taking me to nice dinners and became a patron of my work. Egan and I would love talking about Kippenberger and Beuys over these dinners. Kippenberger would flaunt his wealth by carrying wads of money around and enjoying fancy restaurants and hotels, while Beuys was discreet, parking his Bentley down the road and riding his bike the rest of the way to the Fridericianum to say, "I'm a member of Green Party." I think we both identified with the former.

Liz and Egan's interest in experimental music and poetry was a bonding point, as we would talk about Dopplereffekt, Serge synthesizers and Jack Spicer. In a specialized art world, a proclivity to consuming all of the arts is rare.

"My vocabulary did this to me". Egan believes that the linguistic is folded underneath the visual and he exploits our idioms for material experiments. Within the material, he mines the English language, our existence, to create this lyrical abstraction in substance ex nihilo. "Man speaks" as Heidegger says. An inversion of Lawrence Weiner's substance poems and wall-text didacticism. These idioms point to the fabulous theologico-political fables of post-secular expression: "pee" is for painting; "sowing his oats"; "full of piss and vinegar."

Our love of all things German brings me to the legend of Cologne. Saskia Draxler would tell Egan the oats were reminiscent of Albert Oehlen and Kippenberger's oat car, a joke about Anselm Kiefer. Carpenter would write his patricide of Kippenberger and explain the distinction between "bad bad art" and "good bad art". Carpenter's paintings (as Kippenberger) were too good so they had to be trashed but before, seriously documented... Egan's paintings are seriously performed jokes. When Egan showed with Nagel in Berlin and saw his paintings through the glass facade of the gallery from a bar across Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz, he saw new paintings, literally framed by that history, and had to contend with that. Maybe he's advocating instead for "smart dumb" as the alternative to "dumb dumb" and "smart smart" as laid out by Ubu's Kenneth Goldsmith.

Egan identifies as an amateur, plopped into a network of professional curators, gallerists and artists. The amateur loves crafts. When we did a show together at Kavita B Schmid, he quoted Blanchot on love and water in the title. Heidegger talks about handicraft in *What is Called Thinking?* For the carpenter's apprentice, she does not learn the customary forms of the wood or how to use tools, but to love the resonances of woodness, the bringing-forth of these resonances. For Jean-Luc Nancy, art is "the productive technique of presence", the act of bringing-forth guided by techne. These paintings make use of many faculties, social, historical, linguistic, all in all, technically skilled, to bring forth a complex matrix of loves around literary philosophy, literary high capitalism and literary professionalism. – Eric Schmid

For additional information, please contact Camille Weiner: 323.549.0223 and camille@robertsandtilton.com

Gallery hours are Tuesday – Saturday, 11:00am – 6:00pm.

Roberts & Tilton is located between Fairfax Avenue and La Cienega Boulevard.

Parking is available on the street and at Dunn Edwards located 1/2 block east of the gallery.