

PHIL FROST  
*Ellipse of Passage*

The gallery is proud to present the second show in Spain by Phil Frost (b. Jamestown, New York, 1973) as part of its involvement in ARCOmadrid 2018. *Ellipse of Passage* offers a chance to enjoy a selection of previously unseen works by the only contemporary artist to have exhibited at the Empire State Plaza in Albany, New York, where his works were in creative conversation with those of the Rockefeller Collection in a show commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the collection's creation. Frost's visual language combines the rawness and gritty edge of the street, through its use of found materials, with the elegance of its painterly aesthetic, in which the importance of drawing—line, stroke, movement, power—is paramount.

Self-taught, Frost defines his personal style as “intuitive perceptive portraiture”. In the artist's own words: “My work is a means to chart and define an interpretation of sensorial experience through perception and the building up of a consequential visual gesture, which amounts to an accumulation of physical trace as passage interwoven through the layers of pictorial depth”. In the 1990s he was part of the alternative New York graffiti movement and was influenced by the music scene of the period, creating images of immense expressive power that are immediately recognizable through the way they juxtapose white patterns, such as letters and symbols, on different levels.

His characteristic figures have elongated faces and stylized necks that recall totems and tribal masks and are the formal elements that establish the principal axes of his complex compositions. Within the superimposed planes, viewers can make out geometric patterns—including circles of various sizes, positive and negative, stars, triangles, hearts—that repeat endlessly to create an articulated structure for both the bright colours of the base and contrasting elements of light and shade, as well as incorporating all kinds of salvaged and recontextualized objects—including boxes, bottles, ladders, baseball bats, helmets, toy cars, brushes, locks, buttons, leaves, feathers, metal plates, numbers and letters.

*Ellipse of Passage* includes several monumental works, one of them a diptych previously on show—in unfinished form—in *Magnetic Shift*, the exhibition at the Corning Tower in Albany mentioned above, as part of Frost's work in progress. The idea of entry to another dimension of perception, indicated in the current exhibition's title, is present in important earlier works such as *Entrance to Perception Gate* (2003-2014) or the emblematic *Consequential Passage of Accumulative Experience in Perceptive Realm* (2002-2014). Through their imposing size, some of the pieces on show here invite us to cross to the other side of the work's surface and pass into the artist's personal and unique universe.

At age twenty-three, Phil Frost was given the 1996 Pernod Award, and in 2004 he received the Pollock - Krasner Foundation Award. He has collaborated on the design of album covers for Sick Of It All and DJ Shadow, as well as working with firms such as DC Shoes, Burton, G-Pen, Huf and SHUT NYC. Of his solo exhibitions, worthy of particular mention are those at the University Art Museum in Albany, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art in Philadelphia, and the Spiral Museum Cultural Center in Tokyo. His work was part of the acclaimed *Beautiful Losers* (2004-2009), that travelled from Cincinnati, Ohio, to La Casa Encendida, Madrid, by way of Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, the Fondazione La Triennale, Milan, and Le Tri Postal, Lille. Other group exhibitions he has taken part in include shows at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, Connecticut, and the Bronx Museum of the Arts in New York City.

Please contact us if you would like to request more information or images.

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