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Jonathan Monk: *These Paintings Should*
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Casey Kaplan is pleased to present *These Paintings Should*, Jonathan Monk's tenth solo exhibition with the gallery. The exhibition is comprised of a collection of new acrylic-based paintings, each emblazoned with screen-printed text that differs from one to the next, always beginning with the phrase "This painting should ideally be hung...". As such, each sets up an imagined reality by dictating a supposed "ideal" placement on the wall, offering an unexpected conversation with iconic artists—from Louise Bourgeois or Claude Monet to David Hockney or Eva Hesse—who exist in the zeitgeist of the public's and art market's eye.

Self-reference and appropriation echo throughout Monk's practice, whose works can often be seen and experienced as a reaction to and in interaction with the art of peers he is most interested in. Monk never considers a work entirely concluded, preferring his output to exist as a limitless continuation of earlier projects, reinventing and reusing ideas of his own and more than occasionally the ideas of others. To Monk, the relationships between gallery and artist, collector and artist, as well as artist and artist, are as much materials to be experimented with as paint or a screen-printing press. Relationships and mediums are recontextualized and reinterpreted throughout Monk's oeuvre, which traverses sculpture, photography, film, painting, and more, in a compounding number of ways.

These Paintings Should found its physical genesis in a project the artist presented in 2011 at Yvon Lambert Gallery in Paris, titled *It's a circus!* The boldly painted but otherwise bare canvases returned to Monk's studio at the conclusion of the exhibition and remained there for over a decade before their reinvention. Within that body of work, abstractions and illustrative additions evocative of the artist's humor and pursuit of play, intertwined with screen-printed text, suggest how the work should (ideally) be installed. By employing a screen-printing press in the creation of unique works, despite the press' well-accustomed role in producing Warhol-like multiples, Monk imbues the process of making with a perennial theme of his practice: absurdity.

The completed paintings recall a series of similar works created by Monk nearly fifteen years ago. The earlier works focused on a grouping of conceptual artists who, like Monk, often worked in text, such as Lawrence Weiner or Ed Ruscha. Comprised purely of text, painted by a sign painter on a white plane, the paintings were without the intense, at times incandescent, hues and additional layers of paint present in the 2022 works. Borrowing from a concept created in Monk's own earlier set of paintings, the works in *These Paintings Should* are primarily about location. In a self-referential move, Monk reconsidered the context in which his work is placed—an art fair, collector's home, or museum—and the possibility that it could be hung next to one of the artists that he would himself like to own. Ideally, *This Painting (Basquiat Warhol)*, Monk's mustard and fuchsia abstraction that includes a character from Seth MacFarlane's animated sitcom, *Family Guy*, should be hung near a Jean-Michel Basquiat and opposite an Andy Warhol, but it could also be installed with nothing at all, or to the right of something else entirely.

Jonathan Monk (b.1969, Leicester, UK) lives and works in Berlin. His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at institutions including: KINDL, Berlin (2019); Vox, Montreal, Canada (2017); The Gallery at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK (2017); Kunsthaus Baselland, Muttenz, Switzerland (2016); Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Roma, Italy (2015); Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2014); Centro De Arte Contemporáneo, Málaga, Spain (2013); Kunstraum Dornbirn, Austria (2013); Palais de Tokyo, Paris and Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris (2008); Artspace, San Antonio, TX (2009); Kunstverein Hannover (2006); Institute of Contemporary Art, London (2005); and Museum Kunst Palest, Dusseldorf (2003). Monk has participated in numerous Biennales, including the Whitney Biennial (2006), the 50th (2003) and 53rd (2009) Venice Biennales, Berlin Biennale (2001) and Taipei Biennial (2000).