



Afstand-Distance-Abstand

In the beginning of March the exhibition "glass-blue days" opened in Albada Jelgersma Gallery. The gallery doors are colored Old Dutch green. Every now and then the sun shines in and you can get a glimpse of some paintings. The gallery space is not completely visible through the windows and is closed. A virus keeps the doors shut and the visitors away.

I walk through the exhibition. Seven paintings hang in the front space of the gallery. They are not very large and all canvases are painted vertically. In the backspace there are five small paintings. Also painted vertically, the size is comparable to that of a head. The paintings in both spaces are positioned on the walls in such a way that colors and image layers of the surface of a painting glow in the adjacent painting. Each painting transfers its colors and surface like a baton to the adjacent painting in a slow painting relay. This creates a panorama of shapes and colors in the gallery space.

The distance between the paintings reminds one of the moments when magnetic fields of two similar magnetic poles are pushed against each other, creating an impenetrable but tangible space. You could read it as a blank line in a poem. It adds silence to the many streak like movements of the brush strokes. The illusion of spaciousness in the works is created by the countless overlapping layers of color in the paintings.

The paint streaks vibrate, submerged in underlying layers, blending into each other and sometimes the colors seem to be lit from behind. In the corners and edges of the paintings one can recognize the first layer and the starting point of the white linen canvas.

The organic shapes that are sometimes present seem to refer to something from a reality or they remind us of dark dancing spots that appear on the retina after looking into a bright light source.

Due to a small microscopic virus, the exhibition has been sidelined and the enthusiasm to show my new works is quite tempered. I have no idea how the current situation will change in the short term and how the gallery can be open without barriers. One thing is certain: the paintings want to be seen and not on Facebook or Instagram. It is too easy to post photos of the paintings to give an impression of the exhibition. The most essential is then absent. The space of the paintings, the distance of your presence and the visual touch.

As long as it is safe and possible, you can visit the exhibition by appointment. By sending a personal message or making an appointment at the gallery. At a self-chosen distance from the paintings and at an appropriate distance from the other.

Best regards and good health!

Rob Johannesma

March 23, 2020