

PRESS RELEASE

Ian Davenport 'Puddle Paintings'

10th October – 14th November 2009

Monday – Friday 10am-6pm

Saturday 10am-1.30pm

PRIVATE VIEW 6-8 pm, Friday 16th October

11 Cork Street

London

W1S 3LT



Puddle Painting: Black (Wave) 2009
Acrylic paint on stainless steel, mounted on aluminium
98 1/2 x 147 1/2 in / 250 x 375 cm

We are pleased to announce the forthcoming exhibition of new work by Ian Davenport, *Puddle Paintings*. In this, his seventh solo exhibition at the Galleries, he continues to explore the physical nature of paint, pushing further his practice and its examination of the relationship between control and chance.

Davenport has consistently employed an intensely rigorous, and most often unconventional, painting process. In this recent body of work, he uses heavy duty syringes to pour lines of acrylic paint down aluminium or stainless steel panels. Initially precise and controlled, each line of pure colour falls down the surface until he bends and tilts the base of each panel, encouraging each line to merge and overlap, seductively pooling and 'puddling' together as their paths are shaped by gravity.

Davenport seeks to harness and dictate the flow of his poured lines: 'I control liquid, I use colour, and I try to choreograph these different elements together. There's a lot of internal rigour to the process, but at the same time it is about chance'¹ – so he asserts control whilst acknowledging the unpredictable, fluid nature of the medium. Each painting illustrates this fine balance; walking the line between dominating the flow of paint and allowing it to run free, so choice and chance bump up against each other, if not even at times, fusing together.

Davenport listens to music while he paints and is a keen drummer. This musical influence is important; the repetition of multiple vertical lines of various colours creates an underlying rhythm that pulses through each work. Like a piece of music, the *Puddle Paintings* are composed of quiet, soft sections that hum in the background contrasted with intense, crescendos of brilliant colour. The paintings vary greatly in mood; from the relaxed, melodic beat of 'Puddle Painting: Light Cerulean Blue' (2008) with its fat, juicy lines of harmonious colour, to the more distinct, animated lines of 'Puddle Painting: Black (Wave)' (2009) that at the base of the work undulate, almost bubbling with life.

The methodical process of repeated lines allows Davenport the freedom to explore colour, to see how one colour sits next to another and creates different effects. His choices are sometimes daring, sometimes subtle, but are always guided by Davenport's intuitive response to colour and its sensory power.

Born in 1966, Ian Davenport held his first exhibition at Waddington Galleries in 1990 and has also shown at Galerie Xippas, Paris, Galerie Slewe, Amsterdam, Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh and Ikon Gallery, Birmingham. Group exhibitions have included the seminal *Freeze*, London 1988, *Nuevas Abstracciones*, Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid (1996), *Days Like These*, Tate Britain, London 2003 and *Passion for Paint*, National Gallery, London 2006. He was nominated for the Turner Prize in 1991.

A fully illustrated colour catalogue, with an introduction by Ben Luke, accompanies the exhibition.

¹ Ian Davenport, interviewed by Serena Davies: 'Dance to the music of lines', *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 August 2006