

May 2 - May 28

Christian Achenbach

Diotima

Project room



Hans Alf Gallery is pleased to present “Diotima”, a new solo exhibition by Christian Achenbach, opening on May 2, 2025, in the gallery’s project room. Marking his third solo with the gallery, Achenbach presents a new series of seven paintings accompanied by a new aluminium sculpture, continuing his sustained interest into the mechanisms of painting and image-making.

Achenbach uses the visual elements of landscape painting to explore states of transition. Painting from a place of intuitive registration, he allows organic lines, geometric forms, and colour gradients to unfold, reflecting a deep engagement with both material and process. As these meditations on canvas starts flickering, motifs emerge – mountains, suns, moons, trees – only to dissolve again into geometric abstraction. “The motif of landscape for me,” as the artist reflects, “is less about describing a place than offering a starting point for painting. While the shapes in the large vertical painting “Diotima” (2025) obviously depict a coastline of an imagined unknown land, it reminds at the same time of the amplitudes of sound waves.”

Thus, at the core of Achenbach’s practice is the challenge of translating an idea or a fragment of nature into painting or sculpture. His process is based on what he calls “visual structures” - shifts in scale and perspective, repetitions, inversions, tonal variations, chromatic transformations, different textures and surfaces, layers upon layers of oil paint that appear to almost mirror the topographical layering of elements and terrains on a map. Similarly, “Untitled (Sphere)” (2025) continues Achenbach's alphabetical ongoing series of sculptures, reproducing the colours and patterns of paintings while conceptually imitating celestial spheres.

This interplay resonates with the poetic sensibility undercurrent in Achenbach's work, suggesting a rhythm, or, through his phonetic titles, even a sense of narrative. Similar to poetry - from Greek *poēsis*, ‘to make’ - the works evoke meaning beyond representation. Each work carries its own visual logic, its own internal poetry, like a map or imagined landscape, inviting the viewer to both observe and explore – to get lost and found.

Christian Achenbach (born 1978) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. He holds an MFA from the University of Art in Berlin. In 2008 he was an artist in residence at the National Workshops for Art in Copenhagen (Statens Værksteder for Kunst). He has exhibited widely in Germany and Denmark as well as internationally.

"Diotima" opens on Friday May 2nd and will be on view through Wednesday May 28.