

CAROLINA NITSCH



DAMIEN HIRST

THE SPOT WOODCUTS

February-March 2013

We are pleased to announce the exhibition Damien Hirst, *The Spot Woodcuts*, at Carolina Nitsch Project Room, 534 W. 22nd St, New York. This collection of Hirst's 40 woodcut spots is shown in its entirety for the first time in New York and is accompanied by a digital catalogue.

The Spot series is based on the simple format of the grid, featuring circular 'spots' of color lined up at regular intervals, with the spaces between them always the same distance as their diameter, on a white background. The titles for the works are of compounds taken arbitrarily from a chemical company's catalogue of 'Biochemicals for Research and Diagnostic Reagents'.

The prints in this series on view are all made from individual circular blocks of wood, each block inked separately by hand, placed onto a matrix, and then passed through a press. The concept and process is similar to the spot paintings in that they are made by assistants (printers in this case) who roll a very uniform amount of ink onto each block; enough to retain some of the wood grain but still create a dense area of color. Then each print is editioned with a specific and constant amount of pressure which lends a slight embossing to each circle.

Hirst began the series of evenly spaced, randomly colored spots in 1986 by painting them directly onto a wall. Initially, he intended for the spots to look machine made, but became more interested in making them less perfect, showing scratches, drips and mistakes of the human hand. He said the idea came, subconsciously, from his father, who was a car salesman in Leeds, and painted the door of their house with blue spots. For many viewers they permeate a strange sense of indifferent optimism and Hirst has said "They're quite hard things to look at. Superficially they're happy paintings, but then there is this underlying uneasiness. You lose your boundaries because they are hard to focus on. Do you focus on the grid or the individual spots or the painting as a whole? Once you start really looking, you get lost."

For further information or images please contact the gallery at 212-645-2030 or email: info@carolinanitsch.com