

# Simon Lee Gallery Gathers Prominent Names Around the Fracture between Figurative and Abstract Art



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Artists have for centuries focused their practice on the issues concerning the perception of the eye, presentation of the world around us, and the question of the picture plane that would allow for the abstract approach, blurring the border between reality, non-figuration, and the dream-like worlds. The new group exhibition *Fractured* at the **Simon Lee Gallery in Hong Kong**, will feature works of the prominent artists, **Kathrin Andrews, John Baldessari, Bernard Frize, Louise Lawler, Daido Moriyama, John Stezaker, Christopher Wool, and Toby Ziegler**, who, across a range of art disciplines, explore one of the modernism's most characteristic formal strategies, **the fracturing of the picture plane**, and who push the borders of their chosen mediums as well.

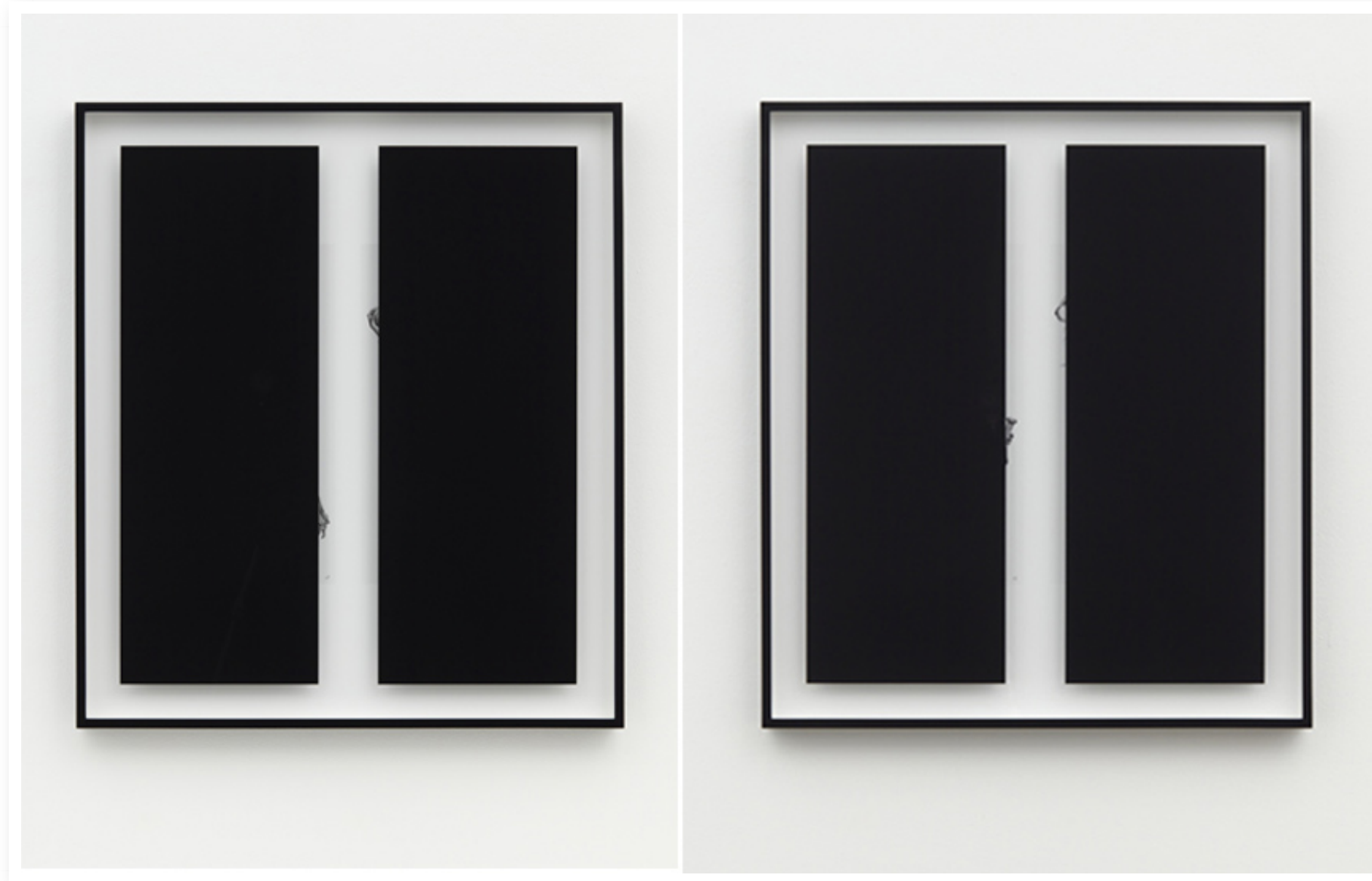


Daido Moriyama - Another Country in New York, 1971/2012, signed verso, silver gelatin print, 100x150cm

## The Door to Abstraction

The discovery and the research into the question of perspective, developed in renaissance, allowed for the representation of three-dimensional space in a two-dimensional plane, while the modernist device of splitting the picture plane by means of formal fault lines, allowed for the multiple view points and for the works that often puzzle and distort our perception. Used for the first time one hundred years ago by Picasso and Braque, this device became a most significant element of the new school of thought, **Cubism**, and since then the heritage and the use of this device by the

contemporary artists have become immense. The featured artists in the exhibition all explore the strategies of breaking up of the picture plane, focusing mostly on the point of the **slip between the figuration and abstraction, placing the figurative compositions in an abstract context.**



**Left:** Kathryn Andrews - Earth Day Door Girl (Left to Right Progression), 2016 / **Right:** Kathryn Andrews - Groundhog Day Door Girl (Left to Right Progression), 2016.

## The Artists

At the period when the painting was considered as absolute, **Bernard Frize** focused his practice on the act of painting itself. The particular handling of the paint, the artist's interest in theory, process,

and formalism are all communicated in his paintings. The featured paintings are a part of the series that re-visit a labyrinthine painting made in 1968 on a ceiling of the Musée d'art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, where the circling patterns of inversed and reversed spectral colors are influenced by the tools and the materials used. **Christopher Wool** has for over 30 years explored the complexities of abstract painting as well. Emphasizing the elements of painting and removal, the artist questions the medium through repetition, elements of minimal and conceptual art, adaptation of photography and the use of different techniques, such as spray painting, silk screen, and digital reproduction. **John Stezaker** is the key figure in the last four decades in the development of Conceptual art and Appropriation to the re-emergence of collage. His photography series, *Double Shadow*, explores the tension between the real and surreal, manipulating the images through inversion, alterations, juxtaposition, and the results are images that unsettle our perceptions. **Daido Moriyama** is another artist featured in the exhibition that redefines the medium of photography. His personal depictions of the urban life, comment upon the social and political turmoil of post-war Japan. The rough aesthetic, experimentation with light, abstraction, and the allowance of the photographic chance, are integral elements of Moriyama's approach to photography. Existing between abstraction and figuration are the **Toby Ziegler's** images of Old Master paintings that have gone through a process of digital manipulation, and the removal of the finished image with the electric sander to reveal the metal beneath. The work simultaneously builds up and strips back the layers of paint, creating the work, which exists between figuration and abstraction. Exposing and deconstructing the excess of capitalism, images of **Kathryn Andrew**, take inspiration from pop art and minimalism, manipulating the visual language of pop culture, movies, television, and stock photography. The produced narrative invites the viewer to pinpoint our attachment to illusions. Relying also on the images that surround us, **John Baldessari**

encourages the viewer's attention to minor details, absence, and the space between things, and through his manipulation of the image, and the painting over the faces with primary colors, and the obscuring of the portions of the scenes, challenges and creates philosophical inquiries into art and knowledge. Exploring what is hidden is a major concern of **Louise Lawler**. Her photographic works questions how we subscribe to the traditional modes of production and places of functioning through the poetic ambiguities and fractures harmonies, created by the disparate arrangement of images on a single plane.



**Left:** Bernard Frize - Lialesci, 2014 / **Right:** Louise Lawler - Not Lizard, 2002, Edition 3 of 5