

SHANE CAMPBELL GALLERY

Jonas Wood
Tennis Court Drawings

September 26 — October 27, 2018
Opening Reception: Wednesday, September 26, 6:00 — 8:00pm

For his fourth solo exhibition with Shane Campbell Gallery, Jonas Wood presents a large-scale installation of 24 tennis court drawings; four sets of drawings representing the Grand Slam tournaments (*Four Majors*) and two sets representing various tennis tournaments around the world (*Four Courts*). Spanning the four walls of the gallery's main exhibition space, the series of empty courts engages in questions of repetition, perception, representation, and composition.

Eschewing the typical horizontal format for a landscape image, all of Wood's tennis courts are here painted on vertical sheets of paper with thick swaths of negative space (often made with deep black ink washes) at the top and bottom of each composition, framing the image of the tennis court centrally on the paper. Consistent with Wood's use of personal photographs as source material throughout his career (returning to memories, family, and the objects of a life lived to populate his paintings and drawings) these vertical compositions reference photographs taken with the artist's phone while watching the matches on television.

The insistence of the vertical composition turns what would seem to be a simple landscape image into the suggestion of a portrait of each playing field. The intense red of the red brick dust at Roland-Garros, and the blue Plexicushion acrylic at Melbourne Park become identifiable characteristics of place, carrying a calm anxiety and visual agitation despite the lack of presence of players, fans, umpires, or ballpersons. Devoid of any recognizable figures within the compositions, the only ones remaining are the abstracted crowds at the matches and the viewers here in the gallery. Occasionally, a scoreboard is present among the text of background advertisements that attempts to pinpoint a time and place while the skewed grid of the court and flat planes of stacked color work to dissociate.

Though the sporting subject matter of this body of work is inherently suggestive of physical activity and exertion, the result of being surrounded by the reiterative image of the tennis court itself is arguably meditative. The individual compositions can come in and out of focus from the group, like traversing the walls of a complete installation of Andy Warhol's *Shadows*.

In two instances, those deep black ink washes at the top of the drawing are partially filled with cropped images of other recognizable bodies of work by the artist. Slowly, it becomes apparent that this is a reference to the environment surrounding the television, the space seen beyond the view of the screen. And now, as viewers, we are back in the artist's studio; back at the source.

Jonas Wood (b. 1977, Boston) has been the subject of many gallery and institutional exhibitions including a recent two-person exhibition with Shio Kusaka at Museum Voorlinden, The Netherlands (2017); a solo presentation at The Lever House, New York (2013-2014); and a monumental image covering the facade of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2016-2017). He is the subject of a major upcoming solo exhibition at the Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, in Spring 2019, and he was the 2017 Honoree for the TWO x TWO for AIDS and Art, Dallas. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

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