

juliette jongma

gerard doustraat 128a

NL - 1073 vx amsterdam

T/f +31(0)20 463 69 04

info@juliettejongma.com

www.juliettejongma.com

### **Paintings you would like to stroke**

Florian and Michael Quistrebart: God 2.0

Florian and Michael Quistrebart make 'op-art' (art with optical distortions), a style with its roots in the sixties which became more popular recently. The reason for this seems simple. On one side the op-art artworks are frighteningly perfectly executed - the patterns are tight and mechanic, and one can rarely see the hand of the painter. At the same time images appear in front of ones eyes and one can at least look at the same op-art paintings in two different ways, which immediately undermines that same pretension. What do I really see? What is the truth? Op-art appears to be an 'eye-game', but at it's best it uses its seductive ways to make you doubt.

If you look at it in that way it is not strange that the Quistrebart brothers named their solo exhibition God 2.0 at Juliette Jongma: their paintings have the truth pretense of op-art, but slightly different. Their oeuvre exists out of two parts: on the one hand they make paintings with colored modeling paste, where they use this paste in such thick layers on the canvas that the work almost seems to get a voluptuous sensation of depth and matter. Paintings where you want to stroke the surface with your finger, where you would like to mold the paste yourself.

Just as interesting are their real op-art paintings. at first sight they are classical works in the Bridget Riley-tradition: crowded, full schemes of lines and geometrical patterns which are as complex it makes your eyes and brains loose their grip - remarkably sensual as well. Just: when you study the works more closely in a 'classical' op-art way, where you see a wall of inaccessibility, the brothers Quistrebart all of the sudden become fragile. In fact: if you get more closely the paintings disintegrate: you can see the moments where the tape did not attach well, the places where the knife fragmented the cardboard. It calls a strange sensation of discomfort: why do the brothers take their distance of that seductive perfection? That is undoubtedly the core of their God 2.0 - God is nonetheless powerful and overruling, but also shows that he does not own wisdom. For the spectator it's confronting: all of a sudden one realizes how easily one was taken in this safe, objective apparent authority. This has disappeared with the Quistrebarts; eventually what remains is doubt. Beautiful.

Hans den Hartog Jager

(translated by Sanne Luteijn)