

NEIL BAKER

Mirrom

OUTPOST

Opening view: Monday 1 March, 6 - 9pm

On view: 2nd to 21st March

12noon to 6pm daily

Open to public – admission free

Neil Baker's show at OUTPOST, Mirrom, consists of a group of small paintings. These painterly images are based upon an unapologetically personal and intuitive approach; that does not rely on a prior conceptual grounding. That is not to say these images are devoid of content. In his choice to avoid the transmission of any clear message his paintings begin to ask questions about how an accumulation of pigment on a surface might generate meaning. Emphasis is put on the space between painting and viewer. Baker's paintings act as seemingly simple, open-ended gestures that knowingly ask many more questions than they answer – a tactic that might also be seen in his choice to build a wall at the entrance into the gallery space.

Although his paintings might be born from the rendering of found objects and photographs, Baker's images often escape depiction through a process of layering and erasure. In this way he avoids any firm allegiance to representation at the same time as subverting his paintings' abstract qualities. We see this most clearly when his images are viewed in series. The contradictory nature of the various gestures presented to us (both within individual paintings and between images) lead one to question the artist's agency; a sombre palette and angsty brush marks are upset by the appearance of a simply rendered, graphic face. In this way we might see his images as records of a painter's activities and perhaps analogies for the painted image – paintings about a painter painting.

Neil Baker was born in Luton, England in 1974. Recent group shows include Voewood project (curated by Kaavous Clayton), Voewood house, Norfolk and KingFisher's Tales, Union gallery, London. Baker will show with OUTPOST as part of the forthcoming group show for Rotate at the office of the Contemporary Art Society. He is currently based in London.

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