

For Immediate Release

Joseph Cohen: Forging the Path of the Concrete at Wade Wilson Art

Houston: Wade Wilson Art is pleased to announce an exhibit of new paintings by emerging artist Joseph Cohen. The exhibit opens with a reception for the artist from 6-8 pm, on Friday, January 8, 2010, and will remain on view through February 13, 2010.

Building on the traditions of the Radical Concrete painting Movement established in the early 1920s by artist philosophers Piet Mondrian and Theo Van Doesburg, Houston artist Joseph Cohen treks across this painting movement with a unique voice and an arsenal of fresh and innovative ideas.

Cohen's paintings reflect the basic tenets of the movement which stated, among other things, that "The picture should be constructed entirely from purely plastic elements, that is to say planes and colours. A pictorial element has no other significance than 'itself'" and therefore the picture has not other significance than 'itself'." (20th –Century Index, Dr. Michael Delahoyde).

Cohen exchanges dialogue with his friend and colleague Joseph Marioni, the artist leading the Concrete Movement today after Robert Ryman. Marioni states: "painting must be on a flat surface because it allows light to distribute evenly across the painted surface." In much of his work, Cohen subscribes to this theory without hesitation, some of his work, however, reflects Cohen's departure from this area of emphasis. In much of his recent work, the artist breaks up his surface literally by building a structure of slatted wood panels, rather than a singular planar surface on which to paint.

Employing reclaimed materials and a found palette, the artist recontextualizes these components while expounding on the material's physicality. The artist engages in the act of painting planes of color on the surface plan of each work. The slatted structures and voids in some of his forms allow for the paint to be realized by nature's gravitational pull. The paint dries in mid-drip leaving row after row of painterly stalactites dancing across the slats' edges.

These drips serve as a rail of sorts as the artist leaves us with a discontinuous surface separated by dripping paint adjacent to the void spaces between the rails. The resulting painting embraces a defined rhythm of surface/plane/positive/void/negative. The resulting tension amplifies what is, for Cohen, a specific and calculated balance of rigid structure that stands in opposition against the accidental and contrary nature of paint in

motion as it moves across the surfaces' edges at an uncontrolled rate toward the inevitable destination of drips caught in motion and drying at last at their precipice. What is absent becomes as important to his expression as that which he includes.

For Joseph Cohen, the Concrete Painting Movement serves as the basis for what will no doubt prove a vivid voyage as he leads the next generation of Concrete painters into this new century.