

*Wasabi Sunrise* is a revisiting and extension of the ideas and processes underpinning Leigh Martin's previous *Loaded* series (2007-2013) of paintings. After a hiatus of ten years Martin has returned to continue and extend explorations based upon the *Loaded* series in combination with his *Dissolve* series (1998-2006). The motivation in these earlier bodies of works was born of an interest in monochrome and minimalist painting of the 60s and an awareness in what Max Kozloff coined 'abstract luminism' that was explored by a number of 'process painters' in Britain and Europe in the 1990s when Martin was a student at the Glasgow School of Art. All of these practitioners privileged colour, materiality and 'objecthood' as the primary constituents of their practice. Although the more recent bodies of work are no longer monochromatic, to date they have often, employed a minimal syntax, revealing the process of making and an intensity of experience that may not easily be articulated linguistically. Up until *Wasabi Sunrise* there had been little of the artist's hand evident and the paintings seemed mute in terms of any obvious narrative outside of the process, but now they demand interaction through their materiality. The artist describes this further:

"I do not resort to representation but wish to present the gaze with an authentic moment of perception. One where the viewer may relate to the work via another sense or senses, a synaesthetic set of relations"

The pigmented resins employed have a materiality and memory of their own. As well as viscosity, colour, translucency, curing times, and Martin's physical interventions, the resins are influenced by a wide range of external conditions, present at the time of construction.

"As I attempt to control one or more of these physical attributes, the process of pouring still allows the resin to behave in an autonomous and unpredictable manner. No matter how I attempt to contain these resins, the process is contingent enough to allow a certain unpredictability and self-determination. I relish this lack or resistance to a specifically given logic or process."

The canvases are rocked from 'side to side' and from 'edge to edge' - the objective being to uniformly cover as much of the canvas as possible. Colour is distributed not via the indexical movement of the hand or subsequent use of a brush, but by the movement/manipulation of the canvas itself. Within the context of *Wasabi Sunrise* Martin has experimented with employment of squeegees to apply distribute the poured mediums. All of the coloured pigments in these paintings are transparent and are layer one over the other and any blemished are sanded back between layers. This eventually results in a smooth glass like surface that entombs all of the previous layers or actions into one. And due to the fast-curing times of the medium, there is little time for subjective considerations or intervention once it is poured upon the canvas.

NB. The term 'loaded' refers not only to the painterly loading of a brush, but also to the notion of intoxication, of being intoxicated with colour and open to synaesthetic appreciation. *Wasabi Sunrise* as a title plays upon synaesthetic characteristics and associations of paint.