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Robert Sagerman *Far Closer*

October 23 – December 6, 2014

Opening Reception: Thursday, October 23rd, 6 – 8PM

Margaret Thatcher Projects is pleased to present, *Far Closer*, a solo exhibition of paintings by American artist **Robert Sagerman**. To be in the presence of a painting by Sagerman is to sense it through various mechanisms. Firstly, there is the visual impact of color, dynamically arranged in saturated fields. Then, the physicality of the paint as layers of paint, built upon one another, lurch forward. Finally, the subtle but ever present fragrance of linseed oil that continues to emanate from the painting long after completion. To take all of this in requires one to be present, stepping forward to realize the tactile effects of his surface, and stepping back again to process the cumulative effect of the painting as a whole.

Referencing the sphere of the Infinite (“Ehn Sof,” in Hebrew) as one approaches the limitless nature of the divine, Sagerman compares the rhythmic back and forth actions of looking at and creating his work with the immersion of one in the infinite, concurrently acknowledgement of its endless nature. In this way, close and far converge to form the present moment of understanding.

The action or state of being present is fundamental to Robert Sagerman’s work. The conceptual underpinnings of his process parallel the exegetical tradition of medieval Kabbalists, using math and numerals as a language for the analysis of mystical experience. Here, the data Sagerman collects, the number of marks per color, the total amount of marks and the time spent for each painting, provide an entry point for the artist to investigate what underlies his works.

Sagerman’s paintings use oil paints that have been color mixed by the artist and modified with thickeners, and an application that requires both intuition and focus. Color choices are intuitive and layers of paint accumulate only after bottom layers have dried. Applied with a palette knife, his mark making purposefully exaggerates the action of one brush stroke and emphasizes the materiality of paint itself.

Robert Sagerman (b. 1966, Queens, NY) has exhibited extensively national and internationally, including recent solo exhibitions at Margaret Thatcher Projects, New York, Ermanno Tedeschi Gallery, Tel Aviv and Galerie Renate Bender, Munich. Paintings by Sagerman are in the public collections of the Portland Art Museum (Portland, OR) and The Karl Ernst Osthaus-Museum (Hagen, Germany.) Reviews of his work have been published in ArtNews, Art in America and many others. *Far Closer* is the artist’s fifth solo exhibition at Margaret Thatcher Projects.

Margaret Thatcher Projects is located in 539 West 23rd Street, ground floor (between 10th and 11th Avenues). Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 6 pm. For further information contact the gallery at: info@thatcherprojects.com, or 212.675.0222.