

MINIMAL MEANS at INITIAL ACCESS

Art from the Frank Cohen Collection
15 September–12 December 2009



Artists John M Armleder, Mathias Bengtsson, Dunne & Raby, Gardar Eide Einarsson, Olafur Eliasson, Gregor Hildebrandt, Sergej Jensen, Shiro Kuramata, Kenneth Noland, Richard Prince, Anselm Reyle, Rudolf Stingel, Katja Strunz, Lee Ufan

The Frank Cohen Collection is delighted to present Minimal Means at Initial Access, a group show that explores how a significant group of contemporary artists have responded to Modernism.

The history of Modernism is in part an account of artists gradually reducing the means at their disposal in order to get closer to an essential truth in art. In painting and sculpture this led from Impressionism to Cubism and on further to Abstract Expressionism, Colour Field painting and finally Minimalism. Concurrently, those artists influenced by the ready-mades of Marcel Duchamp utilised objects from everyday life and by changing the context in which they were perceived, turned them into works of art.

Both these trajectories of artistic practice were ways of paring down the basic elements of art. In doing so the artists were emphasising what was necessary for a work of art to exist.

This exhibition begins at the end of Modernism with two great works from the 1970s by the colour field painter Kenneth Noland. In the post-modern era artists have appropriated this aesthetic. No longer seeking essential truth by reducing form and subject matter, the artists in Minimal Means play games with the art historical conditions of Modernism, using the precedents it set as a platform upon which to experiment.

Works by Rudolf Stingel, such as *Untitled*, 2005, assert a postmodern position and aesthetic that corresponds with other works in the exhibition, such as *Campanula persicifolia*, 2008, by John M Armleder. These works have the appearance of Modernist paintings but are using the reduced form and aesthetic as part of a wider project that includes various forms and media. Minimal Means will also showcase works from Cohen's contemporary furniture and design collection, such as *Pylon Chair* by Tom Dixon and 'Slice' *Chaise Lounge* by Mathias Bengtsson.

Always ahead of the trends in the contemporary art market, Frank Cohen has been collecting contemporary art for over thirty years, and this exhibition at Initial Access will showcase a part of his collection not before seen in the UK.

Initial Access opened on 19 January 2007, as a space to present exhibitions from Frank Cohen's internationally important collection of contemporary art. It is sited on the outskirts of the millennium city of Wolverhampton, in two refurbished warehouses that provide 10,000 sq feet of exhibition space. Initial Access presents different aspects of the Collection in a series of exhibitions curated by David Thorp. The programme is designed to mount shows of new acquisitions to the collection, explore themes among works that may not have been seen before and give the public an opportunity to see more of the collection currently in store.

Image credits, reading from left to right:

Anselm Reyle, *Untitled* 2006

Rudolf Stingel, *Untitled* 2005

John M Armleder, *Convallaria Majalis* 2003

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Visitor Information:

Initial Access Units 19 & 20,
Calibre Industrial Park, Laches Close,
Off Enterprise Drive, Four Ashes,
Wolverhampton, WV10 7DZ
Website www.initialaccess.co.uk

Hours Tuesday–Friday 11am–4pm,
Sat. 10am–4pm Admission Free
Visitor info: +44 (0) 1902 790419,
info@initialaccess.co.uk

Train/Taxi Wolverhampton Station is on a direct route from Birmingham and London Euston. Initial Access in Four Ashes is a ten minute drive from the station

Car

At the M6 J12:
from the North take the first exit OR
from the South, take the third exit,
on to the A5 heading east towards
Brownhills & Cannock.
After approx 200 meters sign-posted
"Four Ashes Industrial Estate",
turn first right into Vicarage Road,

Continue straight for approx 1.5 miles,
taking the third left into Enterprise Drive and
right into Laches Close, continue round and
turn right at the multi-coloured sculpture,
where you will find us on the left.
On-site parking is free.