

## Dino Zrnec at Vin Vin

Press Release: *Paintings*

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Dino Zrnec's paintings look like creases on a palm. They are beige and blue—veins and skin. Their thin lines slant and curve and connect, each in their own way, yet each by the same process. And in a sense, reading them is like reading a palm. It's not that, like palmists, we look to them to see our fate—but rather that, like the cracks in our skin, empty and dry, they are vessels into which we can project fantasies. As abstract paintings, they beg viewers to recognize things from the real world. Yet

the associations they stir are loose. We humor them, but they are not the “point.” Likewise, we don’t plan our lives based on the cracks in the skin on the underside of our hands, and yet we long to know what they tell us about ourselves and our fate. They are banal and silly; dry and magical.

Everyone’s palm creases follow a rather standard pattern. And yet, their subtle individuality is quite personal. Likewise, Zrnec’s process follows self-imposed rules, but always produces unique works. He repeatedly primes the canvases, building layers until they become overstretched, cracked. When he paints the canvas, the color bleeds into the cracks on the back. The canvases are then restretched so that the back becomes the front.

Borrowing processes and materials for canvas preparation from European Old Masters, Zrnec’s paintings are made, literally and conceptually, from the structures surrounding painting—its history, traditions, procedures, and materials. For instance, he highlights painting’s architectural structures, incorporating a photograph of the garden behind the gallery. The work is self-referential; not because it references itself as paint on canvas in the legacy of Minimalism, but because it turns all of the external, hidden, and structural components that comprise painting into its subject.

Zrnec shows the backside of painting, literally: what’s in back of the gallery, the back of the canvas. By extension, he reveals the structures that underpin the discipline; he plays with (yet works within) the rules of production. With a dose of dry humor, his work prompts meditation on the banality and pervasiveness of systems which produce painting and meaning.







Dino Zrnek (b. 1983, Zagreb), lives and works in Zagreb, Croatia. Recent exhibitions include "Until Tomorrow" at Annex Gallery, Pula (HR), "Ensure for size" at Kunsthaus Graz (AT), "Closed circuit" at Apoteka, Vodnjan (HR), "T-HT Award" at MSU, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb (HR). Upcoming: MSU, Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb (HR)