

gsl pro je kt

CERTAIN BLACKS PRESS RELEASE

Opening: Sunday 15th October 2017, 3-7pm

16th Oct - 12th Nov

GSL Projects presents a group exhibition in response to a recent book by French writer and philosopher Alain Badiou called *Black* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017). Sub-titled *The Brilliance of a non-color*, the book opens with autobiographical chapters about the author's childhood and youth, followed by chapters that explore black and blackness across human culture. He writes succinctly, and with insight, about an astonishing range of topics that include the black flags of ISIS and anarchism; the black attire of Catholic priests; and what scientists call 'dark matter'. A rich - and debatable - conclusion tackles, and rejects, any form of classification of humans based on skin color.

Certain Blacks is the title of an album by the African-American jazz band Art Ensemble of Chicago, recorded in Paris in 1970. The 24-minute track taking up Side 1 is called *Do What They Wanna*. The AEC was noting with approval that certain Blacks – including themselves, of course – rejected the everyday constraints of a racist society. Almost 50 years later, this exhibition adapts the title, using it to describe half a dozen artists who explore black materials in different ways.

Apart from a discussion of what French artist Pierre Soulages termed his 'ultrablack' paintings, Badiou has little to say about the visual arts. Perhaps *Certain Blacks* could be treated as a hypothetical first draft of a missing chapter!

***Certain Blacks* features works by Mishka Henner, Alana Lake, Shannon Lewis, Esther Perbandt, Stefan Riebel and Andreas Schmidt.**

***Certain Blacks* is curated by Berlin-based writer David Evans. Recent books include *Appropriation* (2009), *Critical Dictionary* (2011) and *The Art of Walking* (2013). He contributes regularly to *Elephant Magazine*.**