

Benoît Maire

Within a context where there are many tedious clichés about how bad things are – how shallow and useless art has become – Benoît Maire seems to have no place. And he is not alone in this nowhere. It is possible that he has no place because his work is geared to escape any given contemporary locale. He operates in relation to the history of ideas and a quizzical recasting of philosophy. Maire does not do this in order to create a pedagogical practice where the artist is reduced to giving amusingly subjective lectures within an academic context. His relationship to philosophy operates in terms of ideas as material. Asking how ideas find material form and how ideas can be used as a way to measure ideas in context. Constantly moving to and fro

between measuring, checking and recasting concepts into material form and back again. There is a constant to and fro here, also, between states of consideration and application.

It is always too early or too late to decide what might constitute a future anything, let alone a future great. It might be better to think about someone who deals with great ideas. Moving recently away from art as a form with which to measure ideas, Maire is moving into a set of works that involve the development of a new language of images. Images functioning in

relation to each other. A step away from the abstraction of language as a series of marks towards the consideration of ideas as a set of interrelated images.

There remains no consolidation of form and content here, but no rejection of it either. There is no stability here. There is a strong obligation on the viewer to *use* the work – but no instruction manual. The work is more of a codex. A transition from scroll to book. The future greatness here is the ability to find forms that function as codices. Taking ideas and recasting them into transitional mode. Operating between ideas. Continuing regardless. Building up a sequence of works that are restless.

Untitled, 2013, silk print on canvas,
135 × 220 cm. Photo: Joachim Schulz. Courtesy
Croy Nielsen, Berlin

