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## Press release

### Marianna Uutinen | *I Am Painting*

November 16 – December 20, 2013

Opening: Friday, November, 15, 6 – 9 p.m.

*I Am Painting* is the first solo show by Finnish artist Marianna Uutinen (born in 1961) at carlier | gebauer. The exhibition presents new works. In parallel, as of November 9, in an exhibition entitled *Last Supper* Salon Dahlmann will be showing an exhibition by Marianna Uutinen and Anselm Reyle which the artists have curated themselves.

In Uutinen's work, the composition unfolds like a thin skin stretching out over the canvas. Explosions of color on large-format canvases which confront and take hold of the viewer. Discos, flashlights, neon and glamour are perhaps what comes into people's minds when they look at her pictures. The physical presence of her work is reinforced by their size and structure. Titles such as *Big Bang*, *Surreal* and *Love Supreme* evoke associations without supplying these works with any clear meaning. The abstract projections of the viewer become concrete observations in the paintings of Uutinen. The texture of her material of choice – conventional acrylic paint – creates a particular artificiality. A plasticity reminiscent of plastic packaging. At the same time, when viewed close up, the surface of her paintings appears almost fragile. This is especially true of the way that Uutinen employs the transparent material of acrylic as a figurative medium. And Uutinen underscores the artificiality of this reality with her choice of colors: neon pink, gold, silver, black.

Uutinen's works reflect a preoccupation with the medium of painting. She plays ironically with the stylistic conventions of kitsch. However, in this case, the artist's excursion into kitsch and her way of playing with colors that is typical of the Expressionists is not purely ironic but, at the same time, investigates kitsch's attitudes and its system of values. The transitions between kitsch and non-kitsch, art and non-art, the figurative and the abstract are important parameters of her work. The artist plays with her viewers, deceives them. However, the expressive quality of her work is only superficial – what Uutinen is aiming at is not affect, merely influencing her viewers' moods or authorship. Instead it is her use of materiality that is the artist's particular distinguishing feature and what she is commenting on with the words 'it is what it represents'. Taking a traditional idea of painting as her starting point, she questions the latter, although it does remain the illusion it is. In this sense, *I am Painting* is a further reference to the concept of painting, its surface, illusion and seduction.

Uutinen's paintings have been included in numerous public collections such as the Malmö Art Museum (Sweden), Seoul Museum (South Korea), The National Museum

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of Contemporary Art (Norway), Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland and the Helsinki City Art Museum (Finland). Her work was shown at the Moderna Museet in Malmö, Sweden (2013), the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki, Finland (2008), the Ludwig Museum in Koblenz, Deutschland (2010) and at the Venice Biennale (1997).