

Tomas Rajlicjh (1940) enjoyed an arts education in Prague at the School of Decorative Arts and Academy of Fine Arts. He trained as a sculptor and soon opted for working in the geometric vein. In 1967 he co-founded the Klub Konkretistů - the Czech equivalent of Nul or ZERO -, which acquired him national fame. A couple of years later the international art world discovered his work at the Musée Rodin in the group show Sculpture Tchecoslovaque.

In 1969 Rajlich decided to flee his homeland due to the Soviet Occupation and settled in the Netherlands. He was named professor at the Vrije Academie and found his vocation to become a painter. Represented by the galleries Art & Project, Amsterdam, and Yvon Lambert, Paris, before long his work was appreciated on an international scale. Rajlich was invited to participate in ground-breaking exhibitions like Elementaire Vormen (traveling exhibition, 1975), Fractures du Monochrome aujourd'hui en Europe (Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1978), Bilder ohne Bilder (Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn, 1978) and, most importantly, Fundamental Painting (1975) at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam.

As this exhibition pointed out, Rajlich's canvases show an ongoing concern with the "fundamental" in painting, not unlike contemporary work by the American Minimalist painters. His early works are characterized by an industrial outlook and a modular quality - their trademark is the grid -, while Rajlich's mature works show a more complex treatment of the key idea that painting is a self-reflective entity. His recent monochromes explore the combination of the impersonal, the gestural and the creative force of light; they are variations on the intensity, luminosity and facture of the paint, all while clearly remaining a factual painting. The artist's sensibility emanates from the subtle modulation of the paint on the canvas; yet, the emphasis is on color and the other elements of painting as well as on the creative force of light that eternally changes the painted surface - all the while emphasizing the two-dimensional quality of the object. The focus is entirely on the painting in and of itself. The plays of light merely imbue these canvases with a life of their own, which never ceases to tickle the sensibility of the viewer. These are paintings continuously reviewing painting.

Rajlich's first retrospective show was presented by the Palazzo Martinengo, Brescia, in 1993. His adoptive nation, the Netherlands, awarded Rajlich the prestigious Ouborg Award for his lifetime endeavors in 1994, at which occasion the Haags Gemeentemuseum showed a second retrospective exhibition; and a decade later in 2005, in honor of his 65th birthday, the museum hosted a retrospective of the artist's works on paper. In his native Czech Republic, the Dům umění města Brna featured a retrospective in 1998, and the National Gallery in Prague showed a retrospective made out of 27 large-scale canvases a decade later.

Rajlich's works are part of numerous respected public collections worldwide, for example: Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Amsterdam; Museum of Modern Art, New York; MNAM/Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; SMAK, Ghent; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; and the National Gallery in Prague. Likewise, he was commissioned to execute monumental canvases, as for example for the The Council of State in The Hague and the Embassy of the Netherlands in Accra, Ghana. From 1999 to 2002 Rajlich was an artist in residence at the MNAM/Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. Since 2010 he lives and works in Prague, Czech Republic, again and near Verona, Italy.

Selected Solo Shows

2018

Tomas Rajlich Fifty years of Painting, curated by Flaminio Gualdoni, ABC-ARTE, Genova, IT.

Tomas Rajlich, Museum Boijamans Van Beuingen, Rotterdam, NL.

2017

Tomas Rajlich, Museum Kampa, Praha, CZ.

2016 - 2017

Tomas Rajlich - Structures in paint, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, The Hague, NL.

Tomas Rajlich: Ab Imis, MAC - Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Lissone(MB), IT.

2015

Tomas Rajlich, Galerie Závodný, Mikulov, CZ.

2014

Around Zero, Padiglione delle Arti, Marcon (Venezia), IT.

2010

Fabbri CA, Milan, IT.

Museo Michetti, Francavilla al Mare(CH), IT.

Museo Cascina Roma, San Donato / Milan, IT.

2009

Kunstruimte 09, Groningen, NL.

Le superfici opache della pittura analitica, Fondazione Zappettini, Chiavari, IT.

2008

Heden, Den Haag, NL.

Galerie Ramakers, Den Haag, NL.

Národní Galerie, Praha (retrospective)- 27 paintings from 1968 to 2008, CZ.

2007

Fondazione Zappettini, Milan, IT.

2006

Galerie Der Spiegel, Köln, D.

2005

Galerie Ramakers, Den Haag, NL.

Dům umění, České Budějovice, CZ.

Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag (retrospective of drawings), NL.

Kunstruimte 09, Groningen, NL.

2003

Jiri Svestka Gallery, Praha, CZ.

2000

Galerie Ramakers, Den Haag, NL.

1998

Dům umění, Brno (retrospective), CZ.

1997

Galerie Zámek, Klenová (retrospective of drawings), CZ.

1996

Galerie Minnen, Antwerpen, B.

Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe, GER.

1995

Link, Contemporary Art Company, Den Haag, NL.

1994

Centro d'Arte Santelmo, Salo, IT.

Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag (retrospective), NL.

1993

Palazzo Martinengo, Brescia (retrospective), IT.

1991

Artline, Den Haag, NL.

1990

Galerie Im Winter, Bremen, D.

1988

Studio La Citta, Verona, IT.

HCAK, Den Haag, NL.

1987

Aele, Madrid, E.

Shinseido Hatanaka Gallery, Tokyo, Jap.

1986

Galerie Im Winter, Bremen, D.

1985

Artline, Den Haag, NL.

1983

Art & Project, Amsterdam, NL.

1982

Artline, Den Haag, NL.

1980

Artline, Den Haag, NL.

1979

Galleria Peccolo, Livorno, IT.

Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, NL.

Art & Project, Amsterdam, NL.

1978

Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, NL.

Centraal Museum, Utrecht, NL.

1977

Art & Project, Amsterdam, NL.

1976

Stedelijk Museum, Schiedam, NL.

Yvon Lambert, Paris, Fr.

1975

Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster, D.

Groninger Museum, Groningen, D.

Art & Project, Amsterdam, NL.

1974

Yvon Lambert, Paris, FR.

Seriaal, Amsterdam, NL.

Art & Project, Amsterdam, NL.

Françoise Lambert, Milan, IT.

1973

Museum Bochum, Bochum, D.

1972

Collection d'Art, Amsterdam, NL.

1971

Stedelijk Museum, Schiedam, NL.

Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, NL.

Selected Group Exhibitions

2018

Pocta Zlatè – Bernard Aubertin, Jan Henderikse, Tomas Rajlich, Galerie Petr Zaloudek, Praha, CZ.

Uit de collectie van Flip Bool en Veronica Hekking, Stichting, NL.

Ruimtevaart, Den Haag, NL.

2017

Lucio Fontana e l'annullamento della pittura dal gruppo zero all'arte

analitica, Palazzo Salmatoris, Cherasco (CN), IT.

White Art, Galerie Petr Žaloudek, Praha, CZ.

2016

Stilte is als ademhalen, Museum Kranenburgh, Bergen (Netherlands), De Iceuze Van Soost Zwagerman.

2015

Atmosfera ZERO - Great Expectations, Cortesi Gallery, London, GB.

2014

SKY! - in Dutch Art since 1850, De Hallen / Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, NL.

Around Zero, Padiglione delle Arti, Marcon (Ve), IT.

Pittura come pittura, l'Arte Analitica degli anni '70, Padiglione delle Arti, Marcon (Ve), IT.

2013

Visioni, Arte programmata e cinetica, Galleria Nuovo Spazio, Udine, IT.

2012

Minimal Myth. Museum Boijmans-Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, NL.

2009

Pensare Pittura: Una Linea Internazionale di Ricerca negli Anni Settanta. Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Villa Croce, Genoa, IT.

Le superfici opache della Pittura Analitica, Fondazione Zappettini, Chiavari (Ge), IT.

2008

Analytica, Annotazioni d'Arte, Milan, IT.

2007

Playground, Galerie Ramakers, Den Haag, NL.

Doors to thought, Galleria delle Battaglie, Brescia, IT.

2006

3m unter Null, Städtische Galerie im Buntentor, Bremen, D.

De Schwitters a Toguo, MNAM / Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, F.

2005

Abstracte Salon, Kunstruimte, Groningen, D.

2004

Pittura 70: Pittura Pittura e Astrazione Analitica, Fondazione Zappettini, Chiavari, IT.

Wege zur Abstraktion III: Farbfilm, Kunstverein Schloss Plön, Schloss Plön, D.

2002

Recent Acquisitions, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, NL.

Een anatomische droom, Stroom, Den Haag, NL.

2000

Pleidooi voor intuïtie, Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, NL.

Suoni della superficie, Galleria comunale d'arte contemporanea Ai Molini, Portogruaro; Fondaco delle Biade, Feltre, IT.

1999

Bleistiftzeichnungen II, Galerie der Spiegel, Köln, D.

Nineteen-ninety-nine, Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, NL.

Rasters, Galerie Ramakers, Den Haag, NL.

1998

Schaakmat, Galerie Nouvelles Images, Den Haag, NL.

Chiaro e oltre, Centro d'arte Santelmo, Salo, IT.

1997

In gesprek met Vermeer, Stedelijk Museum Het Prinsenhof, Delft, NL.

Konkrete Kunst & Cinétisme & Op Art, Galerie der Spiegel, Köln, D.

Arte a Contatto e Borderer, Galleria Peccolo, Livorno, IT.

1996

Aspekte Niederländischer Kunst heute, Städtische Galerie, Lüdenscheid, D.

1995

Indizi terrestri, Palazzo Ducale, Mantova, IT.

1993

Abstrakt, Der Deutsche Künstlerbund, Dresden, D.

1992

22 jaar verzamelen, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, D.

En Suite, HCAK, Den Haag, NL.

1991

Art Works, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, NL.

1989

Verzameling aan zee II, Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, NL.

Fundamentale Malerei, Kunstverein, Arnsberg, D.

1988

Verzameling aan zee, Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, NL.

Op het eerste gezicht, Noordbrabants Museum, 's-Hertogenbosch; Stedelijk Museum Het Prinsenhof, Delft, NL.

1987

Fundamental Painting, Galerie Schuppenhauer, Koln, D.

Fundamental Painting, ArtLine, Den Haag, NL.

Fundamental Painting, Galleria Piccolo, Livorno, IT.

Kunst van de 20ste eeuw, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, D.

Spiel der Überraschungen, Städtische Galerie, Bocholt, D.

Zesmaal schilderen, Culturele Raad, Vlissingen, NL.

1986

Het oog op Den Haag, Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, NL.

L'art dans l'usine, Institut Néerlandais, Paris, F.

Aspecten van het Tekenen, Stedelijk Museum, Schiedam, NL.

1985

Signalen van Buiten, Museum De Beyerd, Breda, NL.

1984

Het Beschrijven van Kwaliteit, HCAK, Den Haag, NL.

1983

Von der Ungleichheit des Ähnlichen in der Kunst, Städtisches Museum, Gelsenkirchen; Städtische Galerie, Lüdenscheid; Kunstverein, Unna, D.

1981

Peter Stuyvesant Collectie, Provinciaal Museum, Hasselt, B.

1980

Haagse Ateliers, Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, NL.

1979

Kollektie Degroot, Groeningen Museum, Groeninge, D.

Unga Hollandare, Liljevalchs Konsthall, Stockholm, S.

Elementaire Vormen, St. Pietersabdij, Gent, NL.

1978

Fracture du Monochrome aujourd'hui en Europe, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, F.

Bilder ohne Bilder, Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn, D.

1977

Trois Villes - Trois Collections, Musée d'Art et d'Industrie, Saint-Étienne; Musée Cantini, Marseille; Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, F.

Elementaire Vormen, Midland Group Gallery, Nottingham, GB.

Kunst van na 1945, Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, NL.

1976

Betreffende het Schilderen, Museum Bommel-Van Dam, Venlo; Stedelijk Museum, Schiedam; Museum voor Hedendaagse Kunst, Utrecht, NL.

Elementaire Vormen, Musée d'Art et d'Industrie, Saint-Étienne; Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek; Niels Onstads Stiftelser, Oslo; Groninger Museum, Groningen, D.

Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz; Museo di Castelvecchio, Verona, IT

I colori della pittura, Istituto Italo-Latino Americano, Roma, IT.

1975

Fundamentele Schilderkunst, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, NL.

Tekenwerk van 10 Nederlandse Kunstenaars, CIC, Gent, NL.

Elementaire Vormen, Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn; Saarlandmuseum, Saarbücken; Kunsthalle, Nürnberg, D.

1973

VIII. Biennale de Paris, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, F.

Lof der Tekenkunst, Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, NL.

1971

Werken van Tsjechoslowaakse Grafici, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, NL.

1970

Artisti contemporanei di Praga, Palazzo dei Principi, Bologna, IT.

1969

Junge Künstler aus der Tschechoslowakei, Berlin, D.

1968

Klub konkretistů, Stuttgart, Jihlava, Olomouc, Karlovy Vary, NL.

Sculpture tchécoslovaque, Musée Rodin, Paris, F.

1967

Nová jména, Špálova galerie, Praha, NL.

Selected Public Collections

Centraal Museum, Utrecht

Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris

Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem

Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag

Musée d'Art et d'Industrie, Saint Étienne

Musée Cantini, Marseille

Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble

Museum Boijmans-Van Beuningen, Rotterdam

Museum of Modern Art, New York

Národní Galerie, Praha

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

Peter Stuyvesant Foundation, Amsterdam

S.M.A.K., Gent

Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

Stedelijk Museum, Schiedam

Stedelijk Museum De Lakhal, Leiden

Stedelijk Museum Het Prinsenhof, Delft

Selected Bibliography

ARKESTEIJN Roel. Tomas Rajlich: A Retrospective in six paintings.

Heden, Den Haag 2008.

BLOK Cor (ed.). Nederlandse kunst: vanaf 1900.

TELEAC, Utrecht 1994.

BLOTKAMP Carel. "Tomas Rajlich" in Bulletin.

Galerie Collection d'Art, Amsterdam 1972.

BLOTKAMP Carel. Lof der Tekenkunst.

Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven 1973.

BLOTKAMP Carel & HAKS Frans et al. Kunst van nu: Encyclopedisch overzicht vanaf 1960.

Elsevier, Amsterdam 1995.

BONOMI Giorgio. Tomas Rajlich: La monocromia anche.

Fondazione Zappettini, Milano 2007.

BOOL Flip. "Tussen tekenen en schilderen" in Het oog op Den Haag: actuele Haagse beeldende kunst.
Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag 1986.

BOOL Flip. Tomas Rajlich.
Galleria Peccolo, Livorno 1987.

BOOL Flip. En Suite.
HCAK, Den Haag 1992.

BROOS Kees. Tomas Rajlich.
Groninger Museum, Groningen 1975.

BROOS Kees. "Tomas Rajlich" in Elementary Forms.
Ministerie van CRM, Den Haag 1975.

BROOS Kees. Tomas Rajlich.
Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag 1978.

BROŽEK Libuše. "Tomas Rajlich" in Bulletin.
Centraal Museum, Utrecht 1978.

COLLOVINI Diego. Suoni della superficie.
Villotta & Bergamo, Portogruaro 2001.

DE BOER Cees. Aspekte Niederländischer Kunst heute.
Städtische Galerie, Lüdenscheid 1996.

DIPPEL Rini. Fundamentele Schilderkunst.
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam 1975.

DOSTAL, Martin. An Entirely Abstract Perspective. Museum Kampa, Praha, 2017.

GUALDONI Flaminio & PETERS Philip. Tomas Rajlich: opere 1969 -1993.
Palazzo Martinengo, Brescia 1993.

HONNEF Klaus. Jaap Berghius, Tomas Rajlich & Martin Rous.
Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster 1975.

IMANSE Geurt (ed.). De Nederlandse Identiteit in de Kunst na 1945.
Meulenhoff, Amsterdam 1984.

LAGEIRA Jacinto. Tomas Rajlich: Nacre et Paillette.
Dům umění, České Budějovice 2005.

LAMARCHE-VADEL Bernard & MENNA Filliberto. Fracture du Monochrome aujourd'hui en Europe.
ARC Paris / Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris 1978.

LOCHER Hans. Tomas Rajlich.
Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag 1971.

LOCHER Hans. Tomas Rajlich.
Haags Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag 1979.

MUSSA Italo. / colori della pittura: una situazione europea.
Istituto Italo-Latino Americano, Roma 1976.

OLIVA Achille Bonito. Europe-America: The Different Avant-Gardes.
Deco Press, Milano 1976.

PAALMAN Hans. Tomas Rajlich.
Schiedams Museum, Schiedam 1971.

PEGORARO Silvia. Toccare con gli occhi e con la mente: la pittura di Tomas Rajlich.
Fabbri CA, Milano 2010.

PEGORARO Silvia & ZANCHETTA Alberto. Toccare la Luce: la pittura di Tomas Rajlich.
Museo Michetti, Francavilla al Mare (CH) 2010.

PETERS Philip. "Kunst van Tomas Rajlich: tasten en zoeken, tobben en afzien" in De Tijd (15/10/1982).

PETERS Philip. "De eeuwige ruimte: het goud van Tomas Rajlich" in Museumjournaal 6 (1986).

PETERS Philip. "The Metaphysical Monochrome or the Perfect Painting?" in Kunst en Museumjournaal 4/5 (1993).

PETERS Philip et al. Tomas Rajlich: Kresby 1965-1976.
Galerie Zámek Klenová, Klatovy 1997.

REISING Gert. Farbe, Felder, Philosophie: Ein ästhetischer Dialog.
Chorus, Mainz 2000.

REISING Gert. Tomas Rajlich: Recent Paintings.
Jiri Svestka Gallery, Praha 2003.

RUYTERS Domenik. Tomas Rajlich: Ouborg Prijs 1994.
Stroom HCBK, Den Haag 1994.

RUYTERS Domenik. "Sensibele Structuren"
in NIKE, New Art in Europe 54.

SOLIMANO Sandra et al. Pensare Pittura: Una Linea Internazionale di
Ricerca negli Anni Settanta.
Silvana Editoriale, Milano 2009.

Tomas Rajlich, "Toccare la luce"
incl. an interview with the artist on ArteTV, 25 September 2011.

VALOCH Jiří. Tomas Rajlich.
Dům umění, Brno 1998.

VISSER Ad de. De Tweede Helft (Kunst na 1945).
SUN, Nijmegen 1998.

ZANCHETTA Alberto. Tomas Rajlich: L'inesorabile divenire.
Massetti Rodella Editori, Brescia 2008.