

STÉPHANE DAFFLON
VARIATION

May 17–June 21, 2024
Opening: May 16, 6pm

Galerie Nikolaus Ruzicka presents the first solo exhibition in Austria of works by the internationally renowned Swiss artist **STÉPHANE DAFFLON** (b. Neyruz, CH, 1972).

Meticulously constructed geometric shapes that combine simplicity with chromatic vibrancy are characteristic of **DAFFLON**'s works. Murals, spacial interventions, object-like paintings or movable panels let him draw attention to a given exhibition site and facilitate an unmediated experience of it.

The lavishly colorful paintings he has created for the exhibition in Salzburg are reminiscent of the classic video game "Tetris," which was developed in the 1980s on the basis of an earlier logic puzzle called "Pentomino." The objective is to place diverse geometric shapes composed of four squares so as to form complete horizontal lines. **DAFFLON** borrows the idea for the formal idiom of his works, prompting the beholder to reconsider his own position in the space in which his experience is set. One feels an irrepressible urge to enter into playful interaction with the works, to rotate and shift them around to produce new arrangements, resulting in a paradoxical perception of static structure and movement, space and object. The rectangles composed in a variety of ways derive from the ground plan and vertical section of our gallery building, to which **DAFFLON** has painstakingly tailored his works. "When I design a project for an exhibition, I take the features of the rooms into consideration. The series then grows independently of those spaces, but always with a view to their provenance," the artist says. He drafts the templates using digital tools, which offer him flexibility in varying the patterns, shapes, and colors. In a final step, he transfers the designs to the canvas by hand.

Another signature feature of **DAFFLON**'s works is that they are uniformly titled AST (acrylique sur toile, acrylic on canvas), followed by consecutive numbers. This practice clearly reflects essential tenets of Concrete Art, which is based on a spare formalist vocabulary of shapes and a focus on structures and systems of order.

STÉPHANE DAFFLON's works have been shown in exhibitions in numerous countries, including the Palais de Tokyo, Paris, the École Nationale des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, the Musée des Beaux-Arts Le Locle, the Daimler Art Collection, Berlin, and Kunsthalle Weishaupt, Ulm. He was also honored with the prize of the Foundation for Graphic Art in Switzerland and the Swiss Art Award.