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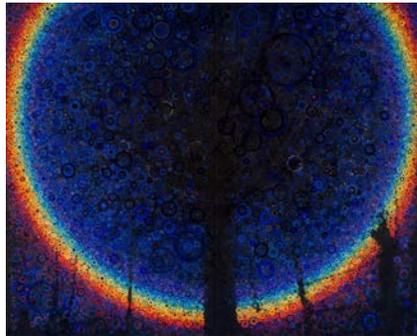
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Randall Stoltzfus – Widening

30 Gansevoort St, New York, NY, 10014

November 14th - January 12th

Opening reception: November 14th - 5 to 8 pm



BLANK SPACE is proud to present *Widening*, the third solo exhibition by Randall Stoltzfus with the gallery. The exhibition will run from November 14th, 2019 until January 12th, 2020 with an opening reception on November 14th from 5 to 8 pm.

Widening represents a new chapter in Randall Stoltzfus' painting. Originally trained as a landscape artist, Stoltzfus turned towards abstraction in the early 2000s as a way of engaging more directly with light as a subject. These early works, which were steeped in both a personal and historical relationship to his Mennonite upbringing, were often dark and monochromatic and built upon the polarity of light and

shadow and complementary colors. As he developed his distinctive style of organic abstraction, which uses thousands of hand painted circles to build the larger image, his palette expanded and the landscapes and natural references of his earlier work began to fall further into the background. For Stoltzfus there are now two relationships at work in his paintings: a poetic relationship to the physical subject and a direct relationship the sensation of light itself.

While his work is rooted in tradition and a deep understanding of art history, his technique lends itself to a multiplicity of readings that are subjective to the viewer. Stoltzfus likens his style to “pulling focus” wherein the subject he is capturing is diffused to a point beyond direct representation and is rendered as halos of refracted light. In this, there is a historical relationship with the impressionist masters and pointillism in that he is painting a psychological depiction of the world. But, where the impressionists sought to convey a scene through blocks of color Stoltzfus renders his building blocks empty; rings of light that have no center and the resulting marks are free to play off each other and with the viewer's eye. By doing this, not only does he open his work up for interpretation but he allows the viewer to see how each piece is constructed as the rings are stacked from the background to the foreground leaving a visible history of each mark made.

For *Widening*, Stoltzfus has created compositions that explode from within; bursts of light radiate from the center of the canvas and dissipate towards the edges. *Omega*, his largest work in two decades, takes the physical composition of a rainbow as its inspiration and expands his palette to encompass the visible spectrum. Each transition between the eight color bands is host to hundreds of minor movements built of his signature rings and the composition furthers the arc of a rainbow into a larger circle encompassing the shadowy silhouette of a tree. The light comes from behind the shadow but is not obscured by it; instead it is transformed into something larger and more vibrant than would have been visible otherwise. As Stoltzfus put it himself in a recent interview, “I am trying to make images that communicate that each of us is a part of something bigger. That we are cooperating whether we know it or not. And that light surrounds each one of us and whatever this is we are a part of.”

Randall Stoltzfus was born in 1971 and raised in rural Virginia. He studied painting at American University in Washington, D.C. and has since shown his work across the globe including solo exhibitions in New York, Virginia, and in Italy where he was an artist in residence at a psychiatric hospital. His work is in several public collections including the Centro Pari Opportunità (Palazzo Penna, Perugia, Italy), Alliance Bernstein (New York, NY), and the DC Council on the Arts and Humanities (Washington, DC) as well as numerous private collections throughout the U.S.