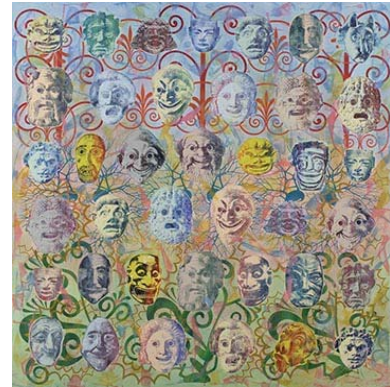


# LUHRING AUGUSTINE

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## **Philip Taaffe** *Recent Work*

May 3 – June 22, 2013  
Opening reception: Thursday, May 2, 6 – 8pm



Luhring Augustine is pleased to announce an exhibition of recent work by Philip Taaffe. The exhibition, the artist's first solo show of paintings in New York in six years, continues to reveal Taaffe as a philosopher of painting, offering compelling meditations on art and culture, both contemporary and historical, and visual ruminations on the interrelated families of forms and images in art, architecture, and archaeology.

Taaffe's work is a unique technical amalgam of freely gestural painting that is often contrasted with carefully mapped and measured surfaces, combined with printings from linocuts, hand-drawn relief plates, silkscreens, and stencils. Traditional techniques, such as paper marbling and gold leaf, are often employed. The artist's meticulous, labor-intensive methods have often been compared to that of medieval manuscripts, yet their contemporary veracity is always evident in their broad embrace and appropriation of the language of modernism. As art historian Charles Stein notes, "Taaffe's reinvention of the beautiful represents a kind of valiant inquiry, a conscientious refusal of the suppression of human possibility."

In this current body of work, Taaffe returns to some of his familiar tropes but employs them in new, previously unseen ways. Sources include natural history illustrations, Roman mosaics, microscopic imaging of Viking artifacts, Syrian embroidery pattern books, masks from Mongolia and the Far East, and devices drawn from calligraphy and book design. Optical vibrancy and visual energy underlie these images, reconnecting abstraction to the natural world and exploring the convergence of the optical and conceptual. "I think the power and possibilities for painting today has to do with binding it to a cultural legacy," says Taaffe. "Painting is where these symbolic languages or forms somehow crystallize and reveal their ancestry — and that in turn shows a certain sense of future possibility."

Philip Taaffe was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey in 1955 and studied at the Cooper Union under Hans Haacke and Dore Ashton. His first solo exhibition was held in New York in 1982. He has traveled widely in the Middle East, India, South America, and Morocco. He has been included in numerous important museum exhibitions, including the Carnegie International, two Sydney Biennials, and three Whitney Biennials. His work has been the subject of several museum surveys, including IVAM Centre del Carme, Valencia (2000), the Galleria Civica, Trento (2001), the Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg (2008), and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2011). His work is in numerous public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Whitney Museum of American Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the San Francisco Museum of Art, and the Reina Sofia, Madrid. Taaffe presently resides and works in New York City.

For further information, please contact Lauren Wittels at (212)206-9100 or [lauren@luhringaugustine.com](mailto:lauren@luhringaugustine.com).

Pictured: *Chorus*, 2011, Mixed media on canvas, 77 3/4 x 76 inches