

Paul Czerlitzki - *Echo*

3.6.-9.7.2022, Opening 2.6.2022, 6pm

Paul Czerlitzki has given his new exhibition the title *Echo*, a term that belongs more to acoustics than to fine art and has its roots in ancient Greek mythology - more precisely in the name of the mountain nymph Echó. Her existence was dramatic: because she protected Zeus' extramarital activities, she was banished by his wife Hera to speak only the words she last heard from her respective counterpart. Narcissus, with whom she later fell in love, could not confess her love in this way - he spurned her and chose his mirror image. Echó became lonely in a cave, and later her limbs are said to have scattered all over the world.

Czerlitzki's art, in its productive-reactive attitude, can undoubtedly be related to this myth. Notwithstanding the fact that the work emerges as a constant feedback loop on itself, as a self-reflexive echo of situational "existing," work like life "beforehand," it is the conventions, protocols, and registers of painting, in addition to references to physicality. These provide a foothold and function as a portal for the gentle dissolution of boundaries that he creates with pigment, canvas, frame, and the architectures and infrastructures through which art is organized, marketed, and distributed. A postmedia notion of painting provides the framework: Czerlitzki eschews finality and prefers the process, the multiplicity of signals, traces and indices in the work also point to performative, sculptural, and photographically describable actions that can be described in sculptural and photographic terms.

"Echo" confronts two series of works created over the past ten years. One is the large formats created by temporarily overlaying primed canvases with untreated ones: Acryl paint is applied to a porous outer canvas, pressed on, sprayed on. The outer canvas is then peeled away, virtually unmasking the finished painting - reminiscent of the dual character of a mask with its outer and inner surfaces, relationships that are now blurred. These works, as elegant as they are simple, form a bass line in this exhibition and are combined with a more recent series called "Relay." Smaller, mostly reddish canvases with unfixed pigment that can change with every touch and through every situation, like landscapes through weather, like our identities in time. But here they are sealed, set in frames and behind glass. This deprivation of haptics then transforms them here into something like overtones, in the sense of resonating, secondary tones.

In any case, my resonance with Czerlitzki's work is based on a calculated economy of loss: directed not only at the present, but also at possible futures and pasts, these works, for all their baroque presence, always lead away from themselves: they are thus not only transmitters, but also potential receivers. Despite their camouflage of autonomy in the sense of the institutionalized talisman "painting," each canvas is at the same time part of a constantly flowing, slow, barely visible circulation. Perhaps the figure of the artist is after all only a commodity to be processed, a leftover to be pulled through the system. Staying with oneself here requires stoicism: in contrast to earlier exhibitions, this one seems more closed, more monadic. Possibly this is due to the glass, which suddenly stands as a metaphorical skin between the canvases. Glass is a topos of modernism par excellence and stands for the desire for absolute transparency, but ultimately rather for that which separates us.

Martin Germann

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Öffnungszeiten: Di - Fr 12 - 18 h, Sa 11 - 17 h oder nach Vereinbarung

Biography

*1986 born in Gdansk, Poland, lives and works in Düsseldorf
Master Student, Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, Prof. Katharina Grosse (2009–2014)

Stiftung Kunstfonds, grant (2021/22)
Fondation CAB, Bruxelles (2019)
Residence Cité internationale des arts, Paris, France (2013)
Studio Bursary Cologne Art Association, Cologne (2015)
Guest Studio FABRIK Burgdorf bursary, Switzerland (2015)
German National Academic Foundation, Bonn (2011)

Collections

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Kadist Foundation, Paris, France Collection Ricard, Paris, France
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