

MATTHEW CHAMBERS

Paris

10 January – 28 February 2015

"My *ripped* works started in 2008 and served a place for *failed* paintings to go. My practice was (and still is) studio oriented and painting-centric. Painting seven days a week (now six), I ended up with a lot of dead-end paintings, works that were confused and muddled, with paint thick to the point of falling off. Ripping and arranging the strips into new paintings allowed my practice to remain waste-free and lossless, the work never stopped and the images never ceased moving. This motion through drawing, painting, and printmaking democratized images and ideas for images. No painting was better or worse than any other and the control of any given painting lay with the painting itself. This is due to an interest in selfless-ness, the sheer size of the works (all 4' x 8'), and the weight of painting history; which becomes greater as my informal education continues.

While the act and presence of painting remained consistent, 2014 marked a shift in the *ripped* paintings, as I specifically made steps to avoid destroying paintings due to complications with material, direction, or otherwise. I questioned how to slow down in an accelerated age, in a time where my paintings become images that compete with every other-image. I set aside the entire year to work on these oil on canvas paintings, freeing the work from deadline and competition. In effect allowing art to become the art of art-making. The catharsis came not from the finished piece or reception of piece, but from the days, hours, or moments in labor. I had to remove the ego of the object by allowing it to no longer fail/succeed or be good/bad, conditions applicable with the thought or act of completion. With this at play, I never had to ask if what I was working on was art or how the piece could finally become transformative because there is no goal of an object. The question the art-making asked was about how each moment was spent. Had I been working? What decisions have I made? Are the decisions boring or interesting? These same questions then directly applied as the strips are re-contextualized and collaged into these nine pieces.

The paintings are the works in the show, the works in the show are questions both macro and micro about the artist's sense of purpose through art-making, and the catharsis it provides. The content of the oil on canvas, now no longer *failed*, is arbitrary and metaphorical in weight, each visual quotations covering another ten, letting the images and decisions wash over the viewer."

– Matthew Chambers