

Anh Trần

MCMLXXXIX

October 26 – November 25, 2023

Société is pleased to announce *MCMLXXXIX*, Anh Trần's first solo exhibition with the gallery. Trần's intuitive, expressionistic approach to painting records different speeds and textures of movement and thought on each canvas. Developing multiple works at one time, her immersive large scale paintings map traces of their own production in synergetic constellations.

Painting for Trần often takes the form of a private performance. In his consideration of the dynamic, open-ended character of gestural abstraction, art historian David Joselit uses the term "passage" to describe different artistic approaches. The passages undertaken in Trần's paintings are diverse and varied, bringing together motifs from art history, her own mark making, published photographs, videos, and information. In this sense, "abstraction is an intermediate stage of transporting an image from one time or location to another."

In the space of one painting, Trần's mark making will range from energetic and circuitous to a slow looming drift. Other forms, like blue rectangular shapes and cloudy white puffs that span across every canvas in the exhibition, come close to what Joselit describes as "the ingrown mark." Associated with painters like Joan Mitchell and Cy Twombly, such marks occupy their own space, existing apart from or in tension with a unifying network or field, and posit "distinct and largely disconnected passages and disjointed temporalities." In its atmospheric, looping visual language, Trần's practice obliquely engages the fraught legacy of Abstract Expressionism: the aggressive masculinity of the "grand gesture," its canonization as a western story, and its various appropriations as a tool of political ideology. Yet for Trần, "the abstract gesture now designates the transfer of information rather than the production of new information."

Trần's practice performs reenactment and relocation not necessarily of the same images, but of the abstract as a mode of seeking freedom. She consciously grapples with the history of abstraction and posits her own highly intuitive, dis-identified, and "nomadic" approach, defamiliarizing established visual tropes to articulate a mode of aesthetic subjectivity and identity that challenges traditional, fixed notions of self, belonging, and dislocation.

Anh Trần b. 1989, Bến Tre, Vietnam lives and works in Amsterdam and Berlin. She has had solo exhibitions at Fitzpatrick Gallery and Galerie Fons Welters. In 2022, her work was included in the 58th Carnegie International, curated by Sohrab Mohebbi, and the 8th Painting Biennale curated by Gabi Ngcobo & Oscar Murillo at Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens. She has additionally participated in group exhibitions at Zeno X, Antwerp; Deborah Schamoni, Munich; Bortolami, New York and Museum de Fundatie, Zwolle. From 2020-2022, Trần was in residence at Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten.