

Space Echo
Ryan Mrozowski

With the title of his third exhibition at Galerie Nordenhake Berlin, Ryan Mrozowski is referring to the *Roland Space Echo*, a tape-based effect machine introduced in 1974 designed to create echo and delay effects. A magnetic tape moves in an endless loop over a recording head and several playback heads, causing the signal to be reproduced multiple times with slight delays. Part of the resulting echo is recorded and reproduced again, creating a feedback loop – a self-reinforcing cycle with subtle, unpredictable variations in the sound.

Mrozowski follows a similar movement of repetition and variation with his *Split Paintings*. They depict the very same floral motif in opulent, contrasting colors. In each part of the works, usually constructed as diptychs or polyptychs, he omits areas he elaborates in the other parts of the multi-panel work. Only the combination of the different canvases creates a complete motif. Some paintings initially look like abstract patterns, making it difficult to discern the original floral subject. Colors flicker and blur. The motif disintegrates due to the empty, monochrome fields in the paintings, while simultaneously being completed by the other parts of the works. Like an echo, we try to return to an origin that, however, is no longer there. The deviations inevitably resulting from the painterly repetition have rendered it unrecognizable. The rough canvas shines through in several parts of the works. Its coarse, grainy structure and the visible, small flaws in the weaving of the fabric are reminiscent of the organic noise of analog tape-recordings, and emphasize the physical production process of the paintings.

The works move effortlessly between rigid form and its dissolution. The disintegration of the motif reaches a quiet climax in the only work that consists of just one part, a “puzzle painting” made of raw canvas, which indeed stood at the beginning of Mrozowski's process of painterly repetition. In the work, the floral motif results from the arrangement of individual pieces of wood covered with untreated canvas and fitted into a picture frame with clear gaps and voids. This monochrome arrangement finds a distant and vibrant echo in the bright reds, lush greens, and radiant blues of the other paintings in the exhibition.

Mrozowski's works don't necessarily refer to a reality outside of themselves, rather, they create a self-referential system. The paintings disrupt our automatic mode of perception. It was ultimately the distortion of sounds, not their realistic reproduction, which proved decisive for the success of the *Roland Space Echo*. The effort to find a logic in Mrozowski's repetition, deconstruction, and defamiliarization of an ubiquitous, almost banal motif eventually leads to the search for a visual rhythm. Together, the images create a dynamic movement of the gaze and an ever-changing and overlapping composition.

Ryan Mrozowski, born in Indiana, PA in 1981, currently lives and works between Hudson and Brooklyn, NY. He received his MFA from the Pratt Institute, NY in 2005, and his BFA from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 2003.

Mrozowski has had numerous solo exhibitions in galleries internationally, recently at i8 Gallery, Reykjavik (2022), Ratio 3, San Francisco (2021), Chapter New York (2019), Simon Lee Gallery, London (2018), Hannah Hoffman Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (2018), Arcade, London, UK (2016) and Pierogi, Brooklyn, NY (2012 and 2010). His work was on view in group exhibitions at Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporáneo, México-City (2020), the Pratt Institute, New York (2017), Art in General, Vilnius (2014), Practice Gallery, Philadelphia, PA (2013), Kansas University Art & Design Gallery, Lawrence, KS (2012) and The Kitchen, New York (2011). This is his sixth solo exhibition at Galerie Nordenhake.