

Galerie Falk Losniza

Ivan Mitrović

Found Realities

30 January - 14 March 2026

Opening Reception

Friday, 30 January, 6 - 8 pm

Galerie Falk Losniza is pleased to present *Found Realities*, Ivan Mitrović's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

Ivan Mitrović does not go to the studio guided by higher powers or led by gut feelings. His practice unfolds along pre-existing images and intentions that are to be realized. At the same time, Mitrović does not rigidly adhere to his own parameters but remains open to the unforeseen.

For years, he has been collecting found doodles, notes, and drawings encountered while on the move, on the street or between the pages of books in Swiss so-called Brockenhäuser. The found materials are unrestricted; what matters is the interest sparked by the motif. He archives these discoveries in binders. The act of collecting and selecting them for his own works emerges from a combination of Roland Barthes' photographic concept of the *punctum*, that which subjectively catches the eye, and the overarching plan of translating them into painting. The scraps and sheets of paper are usually made with felt tip pen or ballpoint pen, sometimes embellished with stickers. Mitrović enlarges the found images many times over and recreates the strokes and surfaces in oil paint, down to the patina of the paper. The awkward as well as the careful, color tones, application, imprints, and cracks, all are captured as precisely as possible. A clumsy child's drawing is reproduced with the precision of a skilled copyist. Even grease stains and delicate creases in the paper are painterly investigated. Yet within this nest of precision, Mitrović allows himself freedoms; he is not concerned with achieving an absolutely identical image. The role he assumes is that of an idiosyncratic copyist, in the lineage of artists such as the American artist Sturtevant (1924–2014), who recreated from memory the works of others, Beuys, Warhol, Oldenburg, while allowing deviations. Repetition becomes the key to difference and the passage toward the artist's own.

In pursuing difference through duplication, Mitrović follows another self imposed rule: there is only one attempt. Preliminary drawing and process take place in the mind; if the execution fails, the project is discarded. Mitrović thus engages with fundamental themes and references of painting: original and copy, questions of authorship, Warhol's paint by numbers principle, the romantic notion of fixing the fleeting onto canvas, of granting significance to the banal, and even the reception history cliché of "my child could do that better." In fact, Mitrović does not learn from the established but from dilettantes, empathizing with the constructed nature of their trees and bon mots. In the act of painting, he reaches a point where only devotion to the craft remains; it becomes the sole content, and any affective engagement with the motif itself, still present during the act of collecting, falls away. As an author, Mitrović no longer judges in this moment: in the act of making, he loses the ability to reflect upon meaning and statement. The effect of this withdrawn immersion transfers to the works themselves; the paintings carry a sense of distance, a sober coolness, but also the suspension of something slightly derailed.

The method of appropriating existing images splits into a second line in Mitrović's oeuvre, one that is far more expressionistic. These pictorial worlds unfold on canvases composed of many small pieces of fabric sewn together. On these stitched surfaces, Mitrović densely clusters seemingly arbitrary motifs that merge into one another. The paintings provoke an excess of information; nervous accumulations whose intensity is heightened by the use of the primary colors red, yellow, and blue. In some of these paintings, individual motifs push forward without taking center stage: a horse head with a silly gaze, a watermelon, a Campari Soda bottle, buttons, a barrel, a stylized flower, a figure with a choker, a funny comic ice cream cone, a vase from a Paul Klee painting, a soldier figure from a painting by Ernesto Schiess. Advertising, logos, graffiti, pop, internet, art history, painterly gestures, all collide indiscriminately and without context. The mixtures resemble contemporary versions of Dada paintings, a fitting homage in light of the current cacophony in the world.

The eye scans the canvases much like scrolling through YouTube, Instagram, or TikTok. A feeling of mental stress arises, as the dissociative elements cannot be connected into a consistent whole. These are attempts to register with the means of painting the digital conditioning of our perception and the associated overload, perhaps even to momentarily pause the relentless flow. Even though Mitrović does not raise a finger of admonition with these works, as painterly image making drives him, a specific tension condenses within them.

Valérie Knoll

Ivan Mitrović born in 1985, lives and works in Basel.

From 2019 to 2021, Ivan Mitrović completed a Master in Contemporary Arts Practice at the Hochschule der Künste Bern. He previously earned a Bachelor in Fine Arts at the Hochschule der Künste Bern (2012–2014) and attended the Preparation Courses at HSLU Lucerne (2011–2012).

Selected solo exhibitions include *Inner Directives* at Amore, Basel (2022); *Reich* at Stadtgalerie Bern (2019); *Passiv-Aggressive* at Milieu, Bern (2017); and *Paint Fast, Paint Smart* at Lokal-Int, Biel (2014). Selected group exhibitions include Basel Social Club, Basel (2025); *Poetry of Preposition* at Space25, Basel (2024); *Bureau Bollito* at Robert Walser Zentrum, Bern (2023); *Contrology* at Kunst Raum Riehen (2021); *Soft Shell* at Kunsthau Langenthal (2020); *Haunted House* at Swiss Institute, New York (2020); and *A Place with No Name* at Sonnenstube, Lugano (2017).

Mitrović has participated multiple times in the *Cantonale Berne Jura* at Kunsthalle Bern (2017–2019) and in *Regionale* exhibitions at Ausstellungsraum Klingental, Basel (2013, 2017). His work was nominated for the Swiss Art Award in 2017.

His works are held in several public and private collections, including Collection Teo Jakob, Bern (2025), and Collection Julius Bär (2024). He has received numerous grants and awards, among them the Work Scholarship of the Canton of Bern (2020/21), grants from the Art Commission of the City of Bern (2018, 2019), the Travel Grant of the Canton of Bern (2018), and the Art Credit Basel-Stadt (2017).