

Heimo Zobernig

Indipendenza Roma

January 29-April 4, 2015

Monochrome paintings for Rome:

Interference colors blue, indigo, magenta, red, turquoise, purple, yellow.

Interference colors are effect colors that work by superposition of thin and highly reflexive layers of light waves. The color impression produced depends on the angle of vision. The effect is most compelling on a dark background, preferably black.

In recent years, I have worked against the idealization of monochrome in painting through series of works that show the difficulty of painting large homogeneous surfaces. The resisting, hard to handle effect colors comes in particularly handy in that context.

The intentionally simple freehand application of the color with a painter's roll generates a texture that, together with the movement of the visitor in the space, produces ever changing colors reactions.

In this exhibition at Indipendenza, Austrian artist Heimo Zobernig is exhibiting a whole new series of 2x2 meter monochromes, painted with interference paint. In addition, two mirror pieces are presented, also featured here as monochromes.

Zobernig states that it was an engagement with color theory and color ordering systems that initially led him to monochromes - paintings that are also empty, naked - and eventually black monochromes.

A painterly move that coincided with the artist's practice venturing into exhibition displays as a format and medium, in which monochromes become one element among others - sculptures, screens, furniture, video and intervention on the space - in a larger play that reinvest Modernist artistic and aesthetic legacies from within the very context that stages them.

Here however, it is the intrinsic qualities of the paint itself - interference, with its imbedded, pop, chiaroscuro effects, as well as a self-reflexive function similar to that of the mirror pieces - that come to embody and reflect the many layered approach to painting in the artist's practice. At once a mere material, and its own object, and still the background for an ongoing questioning of its capacity to be the site of a resistance.

As Zobernig says, « A painting is not always seen from an ideal viewing position. » This is quite clear as one moves around in the exhibition space.