

André Tehrani Monolog

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7–30
November
2024

Galleri Haaken is proud to present *Monolog*, André Tehrani's first solo exhibition with the gallery. The presentation consists of a selection of acrylic paintings, a group of wall objects produced in aluminium and a publication which shares its title with the exhibition. By prefacing the publication's essay with an encouragement to construct the bull's eye following the arrow's release, an inverted conceptual procedure is suggested: The exhibited works may have existed prior to the intention ascribed to them. As regards the specific images on display, however, the text says little. Instead it places more emphasis on speculations surrounding the neologism of "lobby formalism", which is implicitly proposed as a label for the presented pieces.

The featured acrylic paintings advance Tehrani's exploration of compositions in which adjoining colour fields comprise ornamental surfaces, which repurpose or elaborate on Persian mosaic patterns. Compared with earlier works, the colour schemes are notably subdued. Although otherwise hinting at computerised tools and processing, the paintings point toward a newfound interest in resisting the readability of eye-catching digital content.

Tehrani's paintings are juxtaposed with a group of wall objects made of aluminium, which also invoke painterly conventions. These pieces are wedge-shaped forms referencing the volumes of half-open windows. Their designs outline the proportions of a variety of window constructions and have disparate depth measurements to one side, indicating openings. The objects are industrially sprayed with colours taken from lists of matches for the search terms *view* and *vista* in a database of commercially produced paints, thereby intimating radically reduced landscapes. As a series, the pieces allude to commonplace metaphors from art historical discourse and the digital vernacular: the Renaissance conception of the painting as a window onto the world and the organisation of software interfaces in the format of closable windows.

Taken together, the exhibition makes a case for restituting a manifestly generic category of abstract art, which typically resides in the vestibules and conference rooms of office buildings. It is tenable to interpret the publication's essay in response to the art historian David Joselit's notion of *transitive* painting, which purports to highlight the economic, institutional and digital networks in which artworks are enmeshed. Tehrani's project homes in on, and fetishises, one of the blind spots of this tangled circuitry. Not only by affording the artistic objects excluded from valorising circulation a generous amount of written consideration, but also by dint of the practical ordeal of producing a body of work as exemplars of this nondescript "lobby formalism". In this sense, the monologue prefigured in the exhibition title is a costly defence for a decorative, banal and featureless brand of abstraction.

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André Tehrani (b. 1980 in Tønsberg, Norway) is a Norwegian-Iranian artist educated at Oslo Academy of the Arts and the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm. Previous exhibitions include *Arbeidstittel: The Workers* (Haugar Art Museum, Tønsberg, 2024), *A Thousand Plus Ghosts* (the National Museum, Oslo, 2022), *Above Us Only Sky*, (Nitja Center for Contemporary Art, Lill-estrøm, 2021), *Genklang* (C4 Projects, Copenhagen, 2021), *Parking and Transportation* (solo, Galleri LNM, Oslo, 2019), *1968/2018* (Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo, 2018), *Image Drain* (Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn, 2017), *Hard Copy* (solo, MELK, Oslo, 2017), *The Miracle of Rigid Fluids* (solo, Kunstnerforbundet, Oslo, 2017), *Soft Measures* (WIELS Contemporary Art Center, Brussels, 2014) and *This House* (Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2013). Tehrani produced a commission for Fjellhamar Elementary in Lørenskog in 2022 and his works have previously been acquired by the National Museum (2022), Equinor Art Programme (2020, 2023), KORO (2020, 2022), Nitja Center for Contemporary Art (2021) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2019).

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