

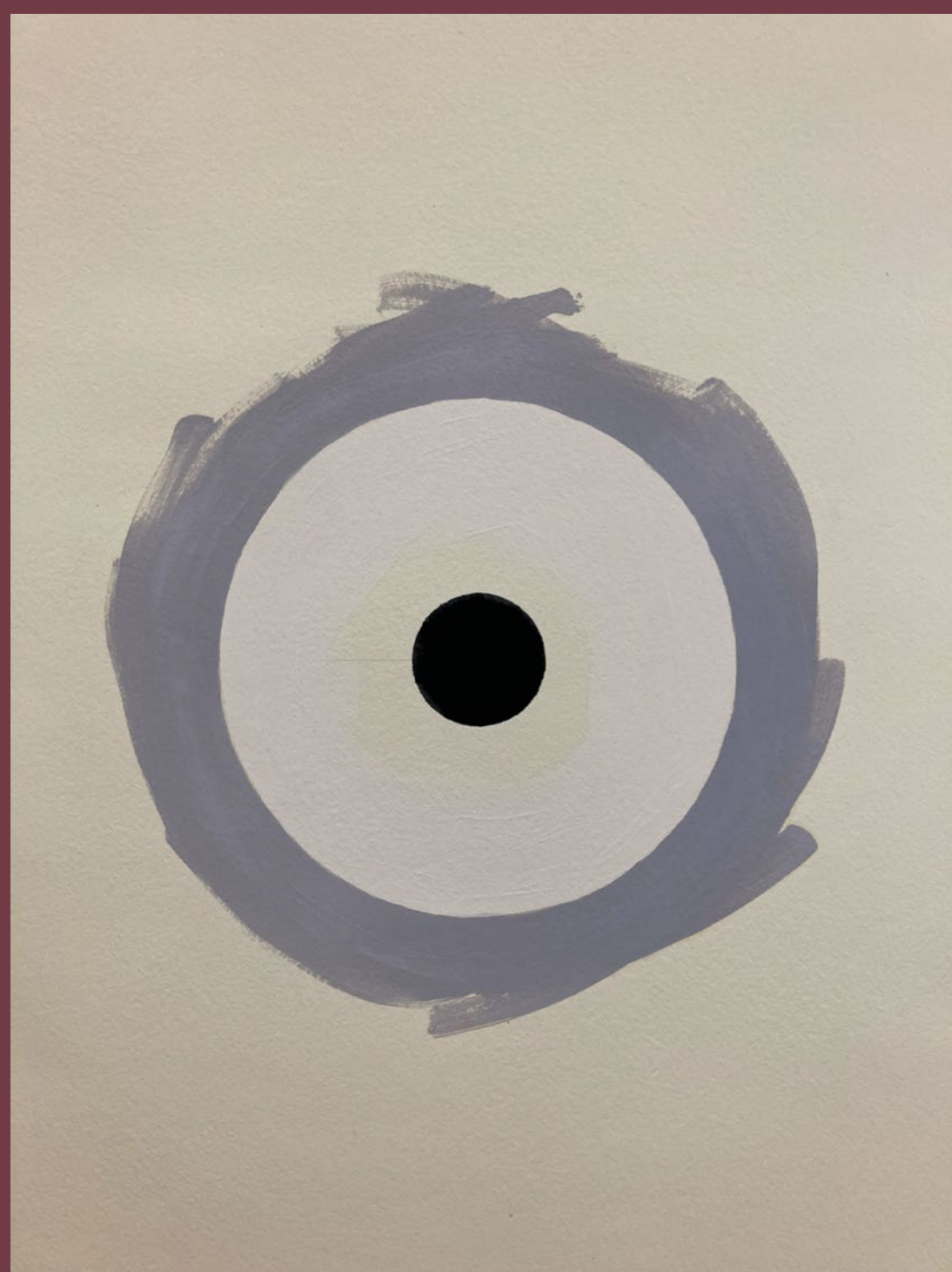
AFTERIMAGES

Paintings by Mimmo Catania,
Wojciech Lazarczyk, and Dieter Mammel
26 February — 16 April 2023

Opening 26 February, 3 – 7 pm
Musical performance by Kenji Minami, 4 pm
artloft.berlin, Gerichtstrasse 23, 13347 Berlin — www.artloft.berlin



© Dieter Mammel, *Selfie*, 2018, ink on canvas, 150 × 200 cm



© Wojciech Lazarczyk, *Project No.2*, 2022, oil on paper, 100 × 70 cm



© Mimmo Catania, *Black Out*, 2021, oil canvas, 200 × 140 cm

The term *afterimage* refers to a fascinating optical phenomenon that artists and scientists typically study as part of their training. The *Merriam-webster.com Dictionary* defines it as follows: “*afterimage* (noun) 1 : a usually visual sensation occurring after stimulation by its external cause has ceased; 2 : a lasting memory or mental image of something; called also *afterensation*, *aftervision*.”

No definition of “painting” encompasses all of its dimensions, but one can say that it is not simply a process aimed at the end result of an image being manufactured on some sort of canvas. The resulting image exists not only on a two- or three-dimensional surface but also in viewers’ minds in various iterations, mingling with each individual’s perception, experiences, and memories. The exhibition *Afterimages* presents works by three painters that set us on a personal trajectory invoking imagination, conceptualization, and reflection through viewing.

Mimmo Catania—Meta-Realism takes us beyond psychological consciousness, beyond a subjective, polarized view of reality. In Mimmo Catania’s oeuvre, space connects contrasting perspectives, creating various angles of undefined rooms. Geometric lines appear to take on a logic all their own. Forms with sharp divisions transform into blurred silhouettes. Contrasts are established with sharpness, almost graphically, while other forms of the same color interconnect without details. At times, different images fill a frame in a graphical presentation, with drawn and painted gestures complementing each other. One sometimes gets the feeling of being somewhere “in between” or as if seductively feeling one’s way back toward unpredictability to explore and let one’s curiosity roam toward an inevitable excitement. In recent works, Catania shares his pictorial reservoir in a playful series consisting of *The Bush*, *The Peacock*, and *The Balloon*.

Wojciech Lazarczyk—Presence in the creative act is conceptual, but at the same time often related to the purely physical experience of the painting process. In the work of Wojciech Lazarczyk, this is reflected in the way he applies layers of color, painting over successive gestures. In a series of works on paper, he presents emergent discoveries of relationships between form and color. The artist calls them “projects,” representations of concepts not found in the real world, such as conceptually imagined memories of cities, among them Berlin, Bucharest, Budapest, and Prague, places with imagined archi-

tecture and swimming pools, parks, and lakes. Lazarczyk uses a collage method that in part resembles film footage montage, made of pasted-on, found photographic images, and includes painted strokes of color glued into place, rather than directly applied, and graph paper-like patterns. As Lazarczyk explains, “I emphasize the design nature of the work without specifying the purpose, nature, or possibility of implementation. I assume that the implementation can be manifested through imagination, analysis, or feeling.”

Dieter Mammel—In his “transit” series, Dieter Mammel draws our attention to thoughts on human values today. The recent pandemic profoundly affected our ways of life, denying physical contact and proximity, fracturing our everyday human bonds and replacing them with virtual relationships. Our social networks are major components of contemporary culture, in which digital technology has assumed a prominent role. At the same time, recent scientific theories on the path forward hold that imagination will be the most-prized commodity in the future, something that algorithms and advanced robots lack.* Mammel draws viewers in with his own analog afterimages in ink on canvas. We, in turn, produce our own afterimages and impressions of what he shows us. We might find ourselves wondering why a young man at the beach under a glowing red sky would take a selfie of himself that ignores the spectacular natural environment around him or why people still spill blood in wars over boundaries and why we contest others’ ethnic and cultural heritage. Fortunately, art can help inspire communities to pursue social and environmental justice on our planet, where Mammel’s painted thoughts have global meaning.

Tanya Berlinski

*Michio Kaku, *Physics of the Future: The Inventions That Will Transform Our Lives* (London: Penguin Books, 2012)

AFTERIMAGES – Paintings by Mimmo Catania, Wojciech Lazarczyk, and Dieter Mammel is part of a series of exhibitions at Gerichtstrasse 23, a building that has become a dynamic multicultural organism, considered by visitors from many corners of the world as an edifice with an open, free-spirited Berlin character. G23 is a space offering layers of continuously developing creative activities exploring new initiatives across various disciplines.

Exhibition curation: Tanya Berlinski
Poster design: studiopyda.com

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