

Terry Haggerty. Sliding Mode Control

"I write: I inhabit my sheet of paper, I equip it, I wander through it. I leave white spaces, gaps (cracks, in the sense of interruptions, passages, transitions). [...]

That's how the space begins, only with words, with characters put onto white paper." [1]

Through gesture and the arrangement of an individual (hand) writing, a paper sheet receives spatiality; in the process it is subject to a structural organization, undergoes a top and bottom, a left and right. Its plasticity transforms it into a stage, a place for the writer's stream of thoughts, and even makes it an "enterable" housing. For Georges Perec, space - for example, as a background for writing in metropolitan urbanity or in the seclusion of retreat - is a doubt, which is to be incessantly staked out and described: "It never belongs to me, it is never given to me, I must conquer it." [2]

Comparable to a second skin, like Mallarmé's *page blanche*, the blank page serves the poet like an empty canvas serves the painter as a screen for projection for an artistic act: the skin within which I lived - replaceable, changeable, renewable. Terry Haggerty's recent works, shown in the Philara collection in Düsseldorf, display an examination of pictorial space and the suggestion of corporeality in his abstract forms. The parallel placement of the individual lines allows a glimpse of the primed painting surface in between and generates rhythmic intervals. Characteristic of the images of the Berlin-based artist, beside the illusionistic depth of his often wall-encompassing compositions, as well as shaped canvases, is a technically consummate surface perfection consisting of several layers of paint with a final varnish that negates any individual cadences. In the exhibition *Sliding Mode Control* - a technical term for a control mechanism for complex, non-linear and dynamic control systems that work under uncertain circumstances - Haggerty takes a new path by allowing clear traces of the stroke in *Perpendicular Electric* (2014). This rather painterly, gestural handling of the surface emphasizes the significant weight of the paint and draws attention to the sensuous, haptic texture as well as the flatness of the panel painting. Striking is the strictly geometric, architectural-looking expression of the lines, which forgo the diagonal, instead focussing on right angle, horizontal and vertical. The rectangular format of the frame is preserved, unusually, with the proportion of length to width (190 x 140 cm). The eye is drawn into the empty centre, seeking the inside and the outside of the shape, which is reminiscent of a Mobius strip, and follows the dance of the lines in order to optically complete the form. This visual sense of being enterable by the eye becomes physical in Haggerty's new, monumental wall piece. In their physically voluminous presence, the two apparently mirroring bodies are reminiscent of the drawings of the artist. Hemmed in by a luminescent-filigree frame, the jet-black structure opens once to the front and again to the rear, emphasizing its affinity to sculptural objects.

Here again, space is created through a symbolic language set by the artist in the form of dynamic linear progressions or opaque surfaces, which the gaze of the beholder is traveling through, conquering, dividing and perhaps filling it with (objective) associations.

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[1] Georges Perec, *Träume von Räumen* (1974), Frankfurt am Main 1994, P. 17, 19.

[2] *Ibid.*, P. 114.