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Terry Haggerty - *Shapes from the edge*
von Bartha, Copenhagen
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A scarlet band twists across neighboring lines of azure blue and bottle green, which in turn flick on their way across the painting's surface. Like ribbons in rhythmic gymnastics, the colorful lines dance on the canvas, sometimes reducing to barely a sharp line before expanding to expose their full breadth again.

For his exhibition *Shapes from the edge*, Terry Haggerty (b. London, 1970) presents eight new works, all from 2023, using a wide color palette, breaking with the monochromatic use of color in his previous series, and introducing new aspects.

Characteristic of his new approach is *Alone together*, like several other works: Co-existing stripes and dynamic color bands, mostly horizontally or vertically organized, result in overlapping shades, creating an illusion of depth, speed, and transparency, despite the high opacity. Haggerty speaks of “new problems” when referring to these intersections, expressing his excitement for the challenge of finding gratifying solutions.

Thus, a grassy green is composed by the overlapping of a lemony yellow and cyan blue. The same blue creates a dark, almost black, hue, when cruising across a scarlet red. Likewise, in *What's going on back there*, the overlaying of a carmine red and a petrol blue give way to a dark tone. The nuances that appear in the layering of the panels are not the consequence of two pigments mixing on the canvas, but rather the result of Haggerty imagining what nuances might come from the merging of these colors.

An additional break from earlier work occurs in the lines themselves, which are significantly broader in the new paintings. With larger, uninterrupted sections of surface uncovered, the structure of the primed cotton canvas beneath is unveiled. This metaphorical “transparency” of laying bare its grounds and showing the artistic process, allows for a more immediate understanding of the work. Haggerty has departed from the many layers of varnish, a signature facet of his previous paintings, and here he likes to quote Frank Stella's “What you see is what you see,” pointing out that the work doesn't intend to be more than just paint on a canvas.

Formerly, Haggerty's works have been characterized by a desire to create illusions of space and volume, relying on the trompe l'oeil technique and manipulating the shapes of the surface to trick the eye into seeing something more than a two-dimensional painting. The trickery still exists within this new series of paintings. Here, Haggerty plays with the angles of the lines, cutting them off diagonally at their ends, creating the illusion of spaces, hooks, and corners on the surface of the canvas.

Thus, the illusionism takes place within the boundaries of the rectangular surface, only indicating an unseen, larger structure outside the canvas. Each respective route drags the forms in multiple directions across the white ground—before reaching the edge and dropping off the canvas.

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Without manipulating the material properties of the painting, Haggerty continues to create a fiction within the frame, by focusing on the use of color and the physical boundaries of the surface. In this exhibition, Haggerty's works meet the viewers with a new openness, an honesty with which the artist trusts and relies on our appreciation for the momentums created by the ribbons. This focus, in interplay with the colorful and constantly shifting stripes, creates new fictions of these lines being like notes on a score or ripples in a weaving, rhythmical, fleeting, textural parts of something bigger.

As part of the exhibition, Haggerty has installed a vinyl work on the inside of the glass dome of the von Bartha lighthouse. Hereby, the artist extends the lines from the paintings on the walls of the gallery space to the outside surroundings of the gallery building, continuing his tradition of working site specifically.

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