

Thomas Nozkowski

24 April – 23 May 2009

Private view Thursday 23 April 2009, 6-8pm

Stephen Friedman Gallery is proud to present their first-ever exhibition of new paintings by American artist Thomas Nozkowski. In June this year, Nozkowski will be celebrated with a mid-career retrospective at The National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa.

Nozkowski has become one of the most original and celebrated abstract painters of his generation. From the late 1970s to the present day, he has made paintings and paintings on paper in two specific sizes. Within this framework, he has mined the complex possibilities of imagery and visual language, leaving behind the confines of Minimalism and the commercialism of Pop. The formal qualities of his work have defied definition. Patterns, broken grids, biomorphic shapes and geometric abstraction often collide and multi-faceted figures and complex ground embrace. The result is a unique vocabulary that Nozkowski characterises as having "a quality of logic on the brink of dissolution."

Nozkowski transforms memories of sites, sensory experiences, and emotional states into a glorious array of colour, texture and visual planes. His shadowy cartography creates a physical terrain for 'tetris'-like configurations of pastel hued blocks. In some paintings, grossly inflated balloons rendered in bold, opaque tones are interlaced with calligraphic lines and stand proud in the centre. In others, these forms balance precipitously on steep slopes and slip behind the canvas or slide behind alternate planes.

Nozkowski's quietly confident paintings do not draw attention to themselves but their transcendent beauty brings us to a place where the ordinary and the magical meet.

Thomas Nozkowski (b. 1944) lives and works in New York City and High Falls, NY. His work has been seen in over 65 solo and group exhibitions worldwide. Recent solo shows include: Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (2008), Fisher Landau Center for Contemporary Art, Long Island City (2008), and *Subject to Change*, Ludwig Museum, Koblenz, Germany (2007). Recent group shows include: *The Continuous Present*, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven (2009), *Degas to Diebenkorn: The Phillips Collects*, The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. (2008), *Point of No Return*, Rubicon Gallery, Dublin (2008), *Think With The Senses, Feel With The Mind: Art In The Present Tense* (curated by Robert Storr), La Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2007), *Multiplex: Directions in Art, 1970 to Now*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2007). A mid-career retrospective of Nozkowski's paintings curated by Marc Mayer will open at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, in June 2009.

Forthcoming exhibition: **Mira Schendel: Monotypes and Other Works** 02 June – 11 July 2009

Gallery hours are: Tuesday to Friday, 10am-6pm and Saturday, 11am-5pm

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