

## Peter Zimmermann CONTACT

24 OCTOBER–24 NOVEMBER 2024

DIRIMART DOLAPDERE



*Infinite*, 2022  
Oil on dibond  
250 x 160 cm

‘No phenomenology of life, of body and the flesh, can be constituted without basing itself on a phenomenology of touch.’

—Jean-Louis Chrétien, *The Call and the Response*

Dirimart is pleased to announce Peter Zimmermann’s sixth solo show at the gallery, titled *Contact*, emphasising the relationship between sight, touch, and digital abstraction aesthetics. The exhibition comprises digital-based oil paintings created by the artist by modifying digital templates using graphic algorithms, with the resulting images transferred to the canvas.

Peter Zimmermann, who reinterprets traditional painting in relation to Modernism and the Colour Field movement, gathers found visuals such as photographs, film stills, and diagrams that he has physically collected or scanned. He deconstructs these images using graphic algorithms, rendering them unrecognisable, and transfers them onto canvas using epoxy. ‘For me, behind the visible surface, every digital image is a text,’ says Zimmermann. He further reinterprets conventional painting through representation, transforming the images that we are constantly exposed to in the era of visual communication. Since 2014, his series of oil paintings, which he has been dyeing with his fingers, reveal the connection between the sense of touch and sight in our interaction with the images we are exposed to.

Under the enduring legacy of philosophy and natural science, vision has often been understood as an active process in which the eye, like a beam of sight or light, scans the environment and thus ‘touches’ the perceived objects. This idea points to a close connection between vision and the sense of touch in that the eye is metaphorically regarded as a tactile organ. For the 20th-century philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, seeing is touching the flesh of the world as part of it. Contrary to the dualistic view presented in the Cartesian model that argues for the superiority of the mind over the body, living beings look at the world not from the outside but from the inside out.

In the current discourse of media theories, the idea is further developed by metaphorically and literally conceptualising vision as a form of touch. Here, seeing is understood as a tactile process in which visual perception is closely linked to physical sensations. This theory emphasises that the eye not only passively perceives light but actively ‘intervenes’ in the environment, similar to the hand when touching.

In digital culture, this fusion of seeing and touching is particularly evident. The contact between the hand and the keyboard or touchscreen is a fundamental operation involving the physical act of touching and integrating vision into this tactile process. Interaction with digital surfaces such as touchscreens and our ‘scroll down’ actions on screens thus underlines how closely our visual and tactile perceptions are now intertwined.

*Contact* brings together Peter Zimmermann’s digital-based oil paintings that emerged later in his artistic career, created between 2019 and 2024, for which the artist creates a new surface in his oil paintings through tactile brush or finger strokes, unlike his epoxy works. However, the background for this production begins with digital templates and motifs, just like in his epoxy works. Digital templates are produced and modified using various graphic algorithms, where the resulting images are transferred to the canvas manually.

Focusing on how algorithms organise a multitude of individual elements and structure them into patterns or ornaments, *Contact* invites the audience to explore the connections between sight and touch in a digital age. The exhibition may be viewed at Dirimart Dolapdere from 24 October to 24 November 2024.



# DIRIMART

**Peter Zimmermann** (d. 1956, Freiburg) received his art education at the Staatlichen Akademie der Bildenden Künste Stuttgart. His selected solo exhibitions include *Contact*, Dirimart, Istanbul (2024); *Vis-à-Vis*, Kienbaum, Cologne (2023); *Sticker*, Dirimart, Istanbul (2023); *abstractness*, Leopold Hoesch Museum, Düren (2019); *Re: Einladungskarte*, Kunststiftung Baden-Württemberg, Stuttgart (2017) and *may be may*, Dirimart, Istanbul (2017). His selected group exhibitions include *Bis die Bude brummt*, Museum für Neue Kunst, Freiburg (2023); *What I like!*, Glaerie der Stadt, Sindelfingen (2022); *Bibliomania – Das Buch in der Kunst*, Städt Galerie Villa Zanders, Bergisch Gladbach (2022); *Grenzenlos. Einblicke in eine unbekannte Privatsammlung*, Kunsthaus Zofingen (2022) and *Resonanzen. 40 Jahre Kunststiftung Baden-Württemberg*, ZKM, Karlsruhe (2017). Zimmermann's work was featured at numerous biennials, including but not limited to the Biennial of the South in Panama, Panama City (2013); 2nd Moscow Biennial, Moscow (2007); Liverpool Biennial of Contemporary Art, Liverpool (1999) and Biennale di Venezia, Venice (1993). Zimmermann's works are included in the collections of the Centre Pompidou, Paris; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Staatsgalerie Stuttgart and Museum Moderner Kunst, Frankfurt am Main. Peter Zimmermann lives and works in Cologne.

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