

Petzel

SETH PRICE

Ardomancer

April 21 – June 3, 2023

520 West 25th Street

Petzel Gallery presents *Ardomancer*, an exhibition of paintings by Seth Price that brings AI-generated imagery and 3D graphics to traditional gestural painting. This is only the second time in nearly a decade that Price has presented an exhibition of new work in New York.

Price writes:

Making art with extremely different tools and media helps you take control and lose it, back and forth, over and over. I work on these paintings with brushes and pens and fingers, and sometimes my feet. Recently I've also been suggesting words to an AI, and we go back and forth until I get an image I like. I apply it to the painting using a reverse-transfer technique often used for shirts and stickers: I print the image on film and lay it face-down on liquid plastic poured on the painting, and when I lift the film the image transfers into the liquid, usually a little raggedly. While it's wet I can finger paint in it, or tilt it to let it run, or blow on pigments and powders. Then I go back in with a brush. When the painting starts to feel like a problem, I photograph it and put the photo in a 3D cinema program, where I add simple virtual objects like planes, tubes, hemispheres, and algorithmic patterns. I print these back on to the real painting at a large industrial facility. This is risky because one error can destroy something I've worked on for months. It happened to two paintings that were supposed to be in this show. I'm dwelling on the technical side of things here because when I make work that's pretty much my entire focus. Art lets all the big questions stow away for the ride while it goes about its business addressing immediate and tangible and formal matters.

I started painting because I want to feel the intuition and immediacy of my body and also the distance and unpredictability of the machine. Contemporary painting offers a very refined way to bring human time and machine time into one artwork. You don't need painting to do that, though, or brand-new tools; the combination of bodily gesture and technical process already appeared in ancient techniques like printmaking and casting. It hit another level with photography, which preserves a human gesture only through registration and development and printing, thereby putting human time and machine time into a single state so uncanny that it once unnerved people. These days, AI does the same thing. Painting, being ravenous and syncretic, saw photography's power and reached out and took it. Since then artists have collaged printed matter to canvas, screen printed on painted grounds, traced projected images with oils, and hand-manipulated inkjet prints. I like working in this lineage, where the tools of the moment get at the feeling of the moment, and the tools of all time get at something deeper.

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About Seth Price

Seth Price (b. 1973, Sheikh Jarrah, East Jerusalem) lives in New York City. His work has been the subject of numerous one-person exhibitions including the Aspen Art Museum (2019), MoMA/PS1 (2018), the ICA London (2018), and the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (2017). He has participated in Documenta 13 (2012) and the Venice Biennial (2011). Recently, Price published a piece of fiction in *Heavy Traffic* magazine that received critical acclaim in *The Paris Review* and *Interview* magazine.

Petzel Gallery is located at 520 West 25th Street New York, NY 10001. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 AM–6:00 PM. For press inquiries, please contact Ricky Lee at ricky@petzel.com, or call (212) 680-9467.