

Mark Francis. Re-Echo

Curated by Marco Tonelli

Modern Art Gallery "G. Carandente"

Palazzo Collicola, Spoleto

26 March – 29 May 2022

Opening Saturday 26th March 11,00 a.m.

One of the most interesting mid-career artists of his generation, Francis' works are shown in a solo exhibition in an Italian public museum for the first time.

He found his international reputation amongst the Young British Artists at the revolutionary Saatchi exhibition *Sensation*, hosted by the Royal Academy of London in 1997.

The exhibition *Re-Echo* presents 15 works made between 2021 and 2022. They show frequencies, wavelengths and vertical frequency ranges, typical of energy waves, as if the paintings were capable of capturing and measuring forces which are invisible to the human senses.

Francis makes powerful, optically intense paintings that are driven by the revelatory insights of contemporary science. Filled with a sense of movement and vibrational energy, his paintings combine electric colour contrasts with dynamic patterns and precise brushwork. Fields of colour are shot through with orbs or pulsating linear forms that dissolve or disintegrate, mimicking streams of light, sonic vibrations, or graphs of seismic patterns. Francis's longstanding fascination and engagement with science provides rich territory for his painting, from the vast cosmic terrains of astronomy, to the minute and molecular concerns of mycology.

Making striking imagery out of what is normally invisible, he explores the visual worlds made accessible by electron microscopes, or sonic data gathered from outer space. But while the feats of manmade technology inform Francis's work, the thing of wonder remains the unknowable quantities beyond their reach. This is what Francis uses his imaginative power and painterly skills to conjure – sparking a tension between order and chaos, knowledge and mystery that is at the heart of his work.

As told by the artist in an interview to the art critic Robert Brown: 'What's important about these works is that they are about sound, but it is invented sound. In some ways they are like a collage of other forms from previous paintings... It's just a pictorial song and I'm taking a poetic license.'

A special thanks to Luca Tommasi Arte Contemporanea. The catalogue will be published in the course of the show, with a text by the curator and an interview with the artist by Robert Brown.

Biographical Note

Mark Francis was born in 1962 in Newtownards, Northern Ireland.

He studied at St. Martin's College of Art (1981-1985) and at Chelsea School of Art (1985-1986), London. He lives and works in London.

Francis's work has been exhibited at MoMA PS1, Brooklyn Museum and Albright-Knox Art Gallery, New York (2004); Kunstmuseum St. Gallen (2008); Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2011); Tate Gallery, London and Liverpool (1995); Whitechapel Gallery, London (1994, 1996); Design Museum (2002); the Royal Academy in London (1997); The Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin (2008); Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki (2010); Kunstmuseum Stuttgart (2009); Mary Boone Gallery, New York (1999); Hamburger Bahnhof Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin (1998).

Recent solo exhibitions include Modern Art Gallery "G. Carandente", Palazzo Collicola Spoleto, Italy (2022); Kerlin Gallery (2019, 2022); Peninsula Arts Gallery and Plymouth University (2016).

Recent group exhibitions include Museum Wilhelm Morgner, Soest (2020, 2017); Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool and Kunsthalle Krems, Austria (both 2017).

In Italy he has been involved in group shows at Galleria Emilio Mazzoli, Modena (1998) and Galleria L'Attico, Rome (2010) and had solo and group show at Galleria Luca Tommasi, Milan (2018 and 2000).

His works can be found in the collections of the British Museum, Tate Gallery and the V&A, London; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco; Museum of Modern Art, Miami and the Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri; Saatchi Collection, London; Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane.

