

Randian: 'Matthias Bitzer, Sequences from a Volatile Now, Almine Rech Gallery, London', by Christopher Moore, May 03, 2018

randian » 燃点

2018.05.03 Thu, by Christopher Moore

Matthias Bitzer Sequences from a Volatile Now Almine Rech Gallery, London

Matthias Bitzer

Sequences from a Volatile Now

Almine Rech Gallery (Grosvenor Hill, Broadbent House, W1K 3JH London) **April 17 – May 19, 2018**

Just opened at Almine Rech in London is Matthias Bitzer's 'Sequences from a Volatile Now'. Bitzer combines painting and drawing – often a mix of portraiture and architectural scenes – with a precisely customized scenography for the exhibition location. Individual works interact with one another and their setting, playing on how when we move through exhibitions, walls and corners obscure and occlude views of different works. In addition, the paintings often include sculptural planes that jut out from the main surface, making it impossible to see the complete work at once – something is always masked – which is picked up in play between the classicized heads and the abstract geometric circles and lines.





Matthias Bitzer, The ulterior howl, 2018

mixed media

103 x 240 cm

40 1/2 x 94 1/2 inches

Courtesy of the Artist and Almine Rech Gallery

Photo: Jens Ziehe

Understanding is elusive though, despite umpteen references, as diverse as Goethe and Georges Perec (himself, a master of subverting established forms). As a visitor, it is intrinsically difficult to grasp the exhibition as a whole because you are inside the hermeneutic circle of the exhibition; you cannot see the circle when you are inside it (actually also a reference to Plato's cave). Like all good exhibitions, it is constructed and revealed as you move through it, but here the viewing – shifting, masked, obliterated – plays precisely on this very effect because vision is frequently masked – in the images (e.g. the portraits and geometric elements), the sculptural elements in the paintings that stop you seeing everything at once (i.e. assume no fixed perspective) and how the respective architectural spaces, planes and divisions of the exhibitions are co-opted in the play at work in and between the individual works.

Of course, understanding remains fugitive! You just cannot see everything at once! Though intriguing questions are being asked, complete answers are dexterously avoided. Who are these historical figures and what are the literary allusions? A story is being told but also a story about telling the story, perhaps the fundamental limit of critique, whether artistic, cultural, historical, personal. The problem always remains the same: distance versus compromise—critical blindness.



Matthias Bitzer, *The third investigator (detail)*, 2018

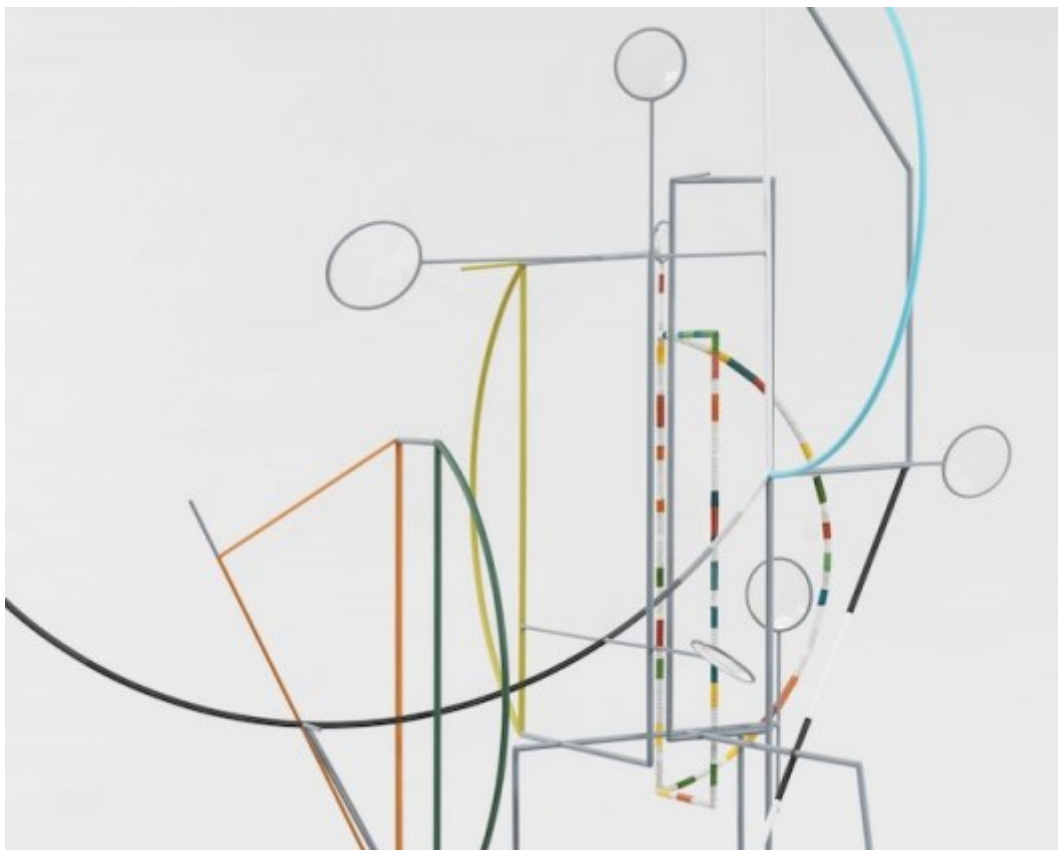
metal, paint, concrete

150 x 120 x 90 cm

59 x 47 1/4 x 35 3/8 inches

Courtesy of the Artist and Almine Rech Gallery

Photo: Jens Ziehe



Matthias Bitzer, The third investigator (detail), 2018

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Matthias Bitzer, The third investigator, 2018

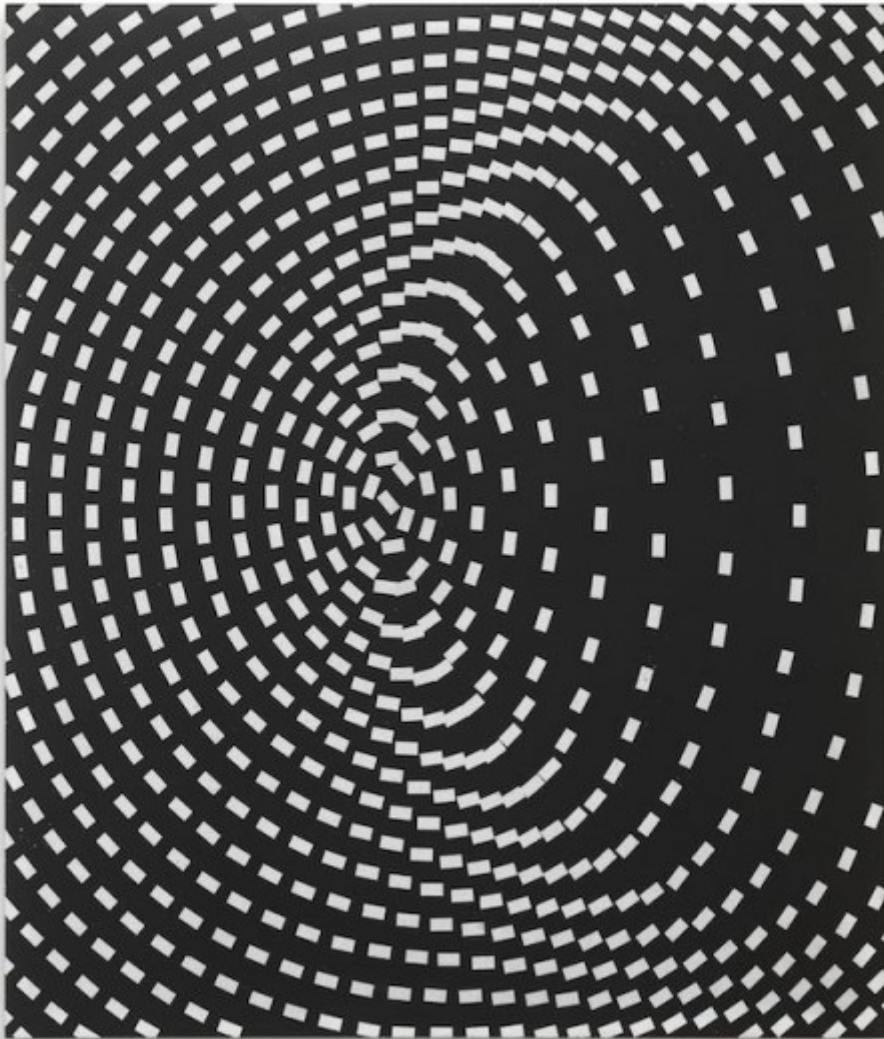
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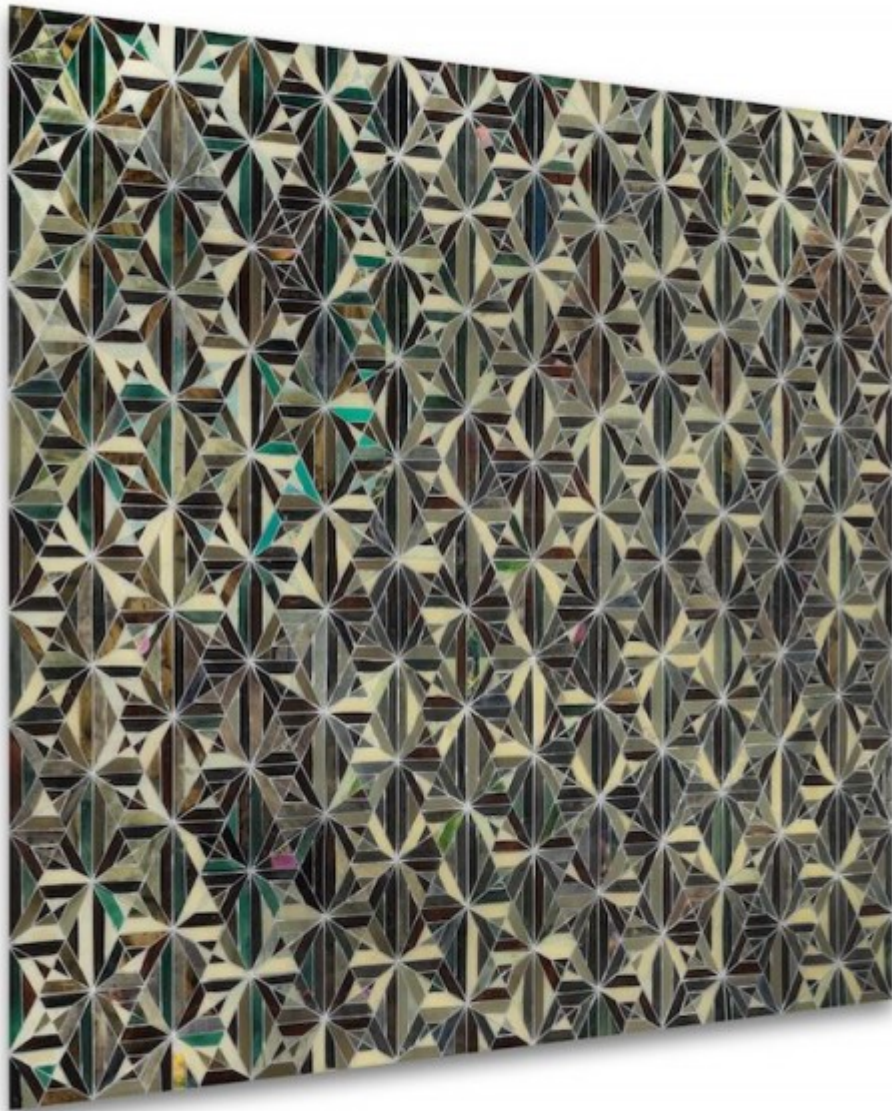
59 x 47 1/4 x 35 3/8 inches

Courtesy of the Artist and Almine Rech Gallery

Photo: Jens Ziehe



Matthias Bitzer, Seed and Concrete, 2018
chestnut, concrete, acrylic
169 x 140 x 5 cm
66 1/2 x 55 1/8 x 2 inches
Courtesy of the Artist and Almine Rech Gallery
Photo: Jens Ziehe



Matthias Bitzer, The darker compartment, 2018
paper and epoxy on board
200 x 160 x 8 cm
78 3/4 x 63 x 3 1/8 inches
Courtesy of the Artist and Almine Rech Gallery
Photo: Jens Ziehe



Matthias Bitzer, Aura of a doubt (sequence from a volatile now), 2018

acrylic and ink on canvas

245 x 215 x 5 cm (framed)

96 1/2 x 84 5/8 x 2 inches (framed)

Courtesy of the Artist and Almine Rech Gallery

Photo: Jens Ziehe