

EMANUELA CAMPOLI

Cheyney Thompson

Decomposition

28 April - 19 June

Emanuela Campoli, Paris

Press Release

Emanuela Campoli is pleased to announce *Decomposition*, Cheyney Thompson's eighth solo exhibition with the gallery.

Decomposition presents a group of works organized around the continuous dismantlement and reconstitution of the motif of the soil. In Thompson's work, the motif is never a point of departure but the result of a procedure. Here, the soil is put into the register of machine imaging and computational operations that extract, quantify, arrange and reclassify visual information. Extracted with a long spike from one meter below the surface, the soil was imaged through repeated multi-focus capture across a grid-based system, producing hundreds of high-resolution exposures that were then recomposed through focal stacking and photostitching into a single composite image. Oversaturated with information, the resulting composite image generates a view that exceeds any possible human visual experience, a view from nowhere.

This almost ungraspable quantity of data is then translated, dispersed, recomposed, and rescaled in a series of materially different yet structurally related works that unfold across the two gallery floors. The process of translation already begins with the exhibition space itself, as the space downstairs is and upstairs fold into one another. Through the reconfiguration of the built gallery into the virtualized geometry of a collection of planes, the twenty-six paintings, divided equally across two floors, form a continuous horizontal register. On the ground floor, the works are scaled down and keyed to the color/value of their corresponding painting on the first floor. Their technique references the surface transcriptions developed by Dubuffet in his *Texturologies* of the late 1950s, and involves a proportional removal of material, resulting in an even distribution of loss.

If earlier motifs in Thompson's work included the binding, structural weave of the canvas, soil becomes an dispersed substrate subject to continuous recombination and reorganization. The installation on the first floor present a series of new *Quantity* paintings that shift from the extension of pigments on the surface to the distribution of mass. Each each work carries the same proportional mass per surface area, composed of oil medium, a dark colour pigment, unbleached titanium white as non-colour and pigments selected for their dark mass tone and shifting hue. By including oil in the total mass, form emerges through the rearrangement of an existing un-dried material, echoing his earlier *Displacement* paintings. Something similar occurs in (title black ptgs), where thick black oil ground is successively contaminated with white flecks, until the ground starts to tack up and could no longer take the contaminant, producing an entropic drift.

The motif is also run under the logic of Thompson's earlier *Cromachrome* series, built from complementary color contrasts from the Munsell Color System. A scan of the soil is parsed so that only the 10% of the lightest and darkest pixel values are retained and reassigned to opposing colour pairs, akin to contrast agents used in medical imaging. As other variations emerge, including a work that uses the Dubuffet's tyrolean technique found downstairs, or *Touch(10000)*, 2026, that quantifies its marks, the only thing that is preserved is the relationship that they maintain to one another. Not the motif as an image - even if it is reintroduced into the exhibition as printed works - but as what remains fundamentally translatable.

Cheyney Thompson (1975) lives and works in New York. His work was recently included in R U STILL PAINTING??? at RRASP 520 8th Ave, New York (2025); Between Pixel and Pigment. Hybrid painting in post-digital times at Marta Herford Museum and Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Germany (2024); For what it's worth, Value Systems in Art Since 1960 at The Warehouse, Dallas (2024); Walk! at Shirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2022); Low Form. Imaginaries and Visions in the Age of Artificial Intelligence at MAXXI, Rome (2019) and in Programmed: Rules, Codes, and Choreographies in Art, 1965-2018 at the Whitney Museum, New York (2019). His work was on view at Centre Pompidou, Paris (2016) and Whitney Museum, New York (2015). Thompson had a survey exhibition at the MIT List Visual Arts Center, Massachusetts (2012) with an accompanying monograph and a solo exhibition at Kunstverein Braunschweig (2012). His work was included in the 2008 Whitney Biennial as well as the 2003 Venice Biennale.