

POSTMASTERS

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LUKE MURPHY

Loser Every Time

Postmasters is pleased to present a group of new work by Luke Murphy.

The paintings in *Loser Every Time* are the products of the artist playing simple childhood games by himself on a screen. Since playing against one's self always ends in simultaneous win-lose outcomes, Murphy's paintings work as an oblique metaphor for the majority of studio practice — artists in their studio, artists in their head and even on their phone — playing and planning, scheming and fantasizing about ideal paintings and definitive outcomes that never happen. By lifting these games and marks off the screen, they transform into diagrams and drawings, and diagrams of drawings.

The layers of marks, the shadows of old games morph into spatial figures onto the ground of the canvas, slowing the viewer's perception, suggesting layers of space and time. The updated Twombly-esque scribbles crisscross between spontaneity and mechanical, surface and depth, existing as both singular events and a nearly indistinguishable, meaningless sequence because the results are not the point. In these paintings, victory and failure are equals. The lines and erasures, the Xs and Os, the half-drawn hangmen, these are the measure not of winning but of time lost.

If there is one theme to my work, it is that it is a project to find a unifying system that will explain everything from unhappiness to joy, from technology to what is the meaning of randomness. These are all pictures or diagrams of the ineffable and invisible forces and the real and imagined systems they interact with. I have tried quantifying elements of the psyche and spirit through codes and systems. My work of the past few years has been an investigation into the fundamentals of randomness and how it powers digital art, the underlying mechanisms of hope and politics, and more broadly our digital age. My work tries to interleave post-atomic anxieties, information culture, with a gnostic belief that the world is irrational.

- Luke Murphy

