

Cheyney Thompson

“Pedestals,
Bias-cut,
/Robert Macaire/
Chronochromes”

25 September – 24 October, 2009
opening reception on Friday, 25 September, 7-9 pm

Galerie Daniel Buchholz is pleased to announce Cheyney Thompson's third solo exhibition for the gallery entitled, “Pedestals, Bias-cut, /Robert Macaire/, Chronochromes.” In this exhibition, Thompson brings together thirteen paintings that are systematically constructed according to a set of discrete material coordinates. Each painting shares the common motif of an enlarged section of the paintings' linen support. Thompson builds a template of this image that consolidates colour value information into zones of highlight, mid-tone, and dark. In a further step, Thompson maps his continued interest in color theorist Albert Munsell's system of complementary colour pairs onto the calendar: assigning a complementary colour pair to each day of work, and changing the colours' value by the hour (noon being absolute white, and midnight absolute black).

Thompson understands this system of painterly production as capable of “registering fatigue, distraction, interruptions as if, in theory, this system had the potential to produce a smooth gradient that could represent a continuous flow of time, or at least the continuities of a logically ordered colour space.” To be sure, inconsistencies occur in these paintings' colour gradients due to the artist's inability to work at all times, every day. Painting is here equated with a kind of wage labour where time itself has become a discrete set of units: countable, and plotted within the support of painting.

The paintings share the same height while every width is numerically unique. This acts to displace the function of the frame as the primary determinant feature of a picture's ability to signify within genre forms. Even while certain formats may resemble a historic genre for painting (landscape, portrait), they are constituted by a fundamentally arbitrary cut into an industrial loom's seemingly infinite capacity for production.

In response to the historically distant monochrome's claim to universality, Thompson's paintings are designated as chronochromes: signalling their subsumption in the rationalized framework of a complete colour system, as well as the instrumentalized time of the punch-clock. This system is sufficiently capable of distributing colour effects as well as imaging images. If the monochrome could be said to have created exceptions, chronochromes can only ever produce example after example.

This systematic approach to painting extends to a group of pedestals included in the exhibition. Thompson writes: “I found that a typical pedestal for my needs (of presenting a document) was 4624 square inches. I treated this number as constant and designed five pedestals that all have the exact same surface area. With this numeric constant, it is possible that the most distinguishing feature of a pedestal (its verticality) could topologically transform into its opposite (horizontality). The pedestals then retain their nominal function as supports for artefacts while proliferating the mutability of their capacity to signify: /pedestal/.” These pedestals present a collection of documents that relate to the names, the lines of research, and artefacts which are the content of the exhibition.