

Casey Kaplan is pleased to announce a new series of work by New York based artist, Garth Weiser. For the first time, the artist will take over the full space of the gallery with a viscerally compelling body of paintings. Expanding upon the underlying use of the grid throughout the history of painting and architecture, Garth Weiser's artworks challenge the nature of perception by continually questioning the process of applying paint to a canvas.

Since 2005, Weiser's practice has involved an intense exploration of medium, color, and space through a masterful application of contemporary mark making. In this exhibition, Weiser moves further toward geometric abstraction from the figural representation of a head and torso that underlie the structure of the paintings in his first exhibition at the gallery in October of 2007. Layers upon layers are applied, areas are taped off, and paint becomes textured by airbrush, splatter, wax paper, and heavily combed surfaces through the use of brush and putty knife. The texture is further contrasted by varying methods of paint including acrylic, gouache, tempera, and graphite. In Weiser's abstractions, Western devices are implied with the consistent use of a horizon line. Luminous circles evoke eyes, as they are transformed into gray and brown scale color wheels, oceanic whirls, pentagons, and stars.

Weiser looks to text and images as a starting point of this process, using these ideas to form an abstracted dichotomy. Influences are drawn from popular culture of the 1980s and 1990s, modern and contemporary art, and graphic design, including the post modernist graphic artist Herb Lubalin. His latest series of primarily black-and-white paintings take their cues from the graphic designs of pop and corporate culture, as he contradicts more intricate and graphic detail with impulsively applied doodles. His meticulously arranged stripes and shapes, shifting in direction and orientation throughout his canvases are inspired by the Halifax Bank and Valvoline Oil logos. These delineated lines and planes are used to define, but not outline, shapes and forms as they push outward, filling up a dizzying expanse that appears to shift and disorient. They contrast starkly against a cerulean blue script that is used in varying methods of drip, splatter, and sketch. These trails are at times definable as text and images, intended to create a desired tension in the paintings. It is in this tension where the surface of the canvas provides a stark contrast between impulse and order, hard edge to soft, as if there are two paintings within one struggling to occupy the same space.

This conflicted dichotomy is exaggerated in the fusing of different mark making applications seen in the way the tempera dissolves the acrylic in specified areas of the activated canvas. It is as if the stripes impose a graphic organization over the embellished gestures, or rather, the spontaneous brushwork is trying to shake or expel the graphic order that is placed on top of it. .. Garth Weiser's recent group exhibitions include: "Recent Acquisitions," Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago,

Illinois, 2008; “Not So Subtle Subtitle,” Casey Kaplan, New York, 2008; “Destroying Athens,” The Athens Biennial, Greece, 2007; “Greater New York,” PS1 MoMA, Long Island City, New York, 2005. Current and forthcoming exhibitions include “One loses one’s classics,” White Flag Projects, St. Louis, Missouri, “Changing light bulbs in thin air,” Hessel Museum of Art & CCS Galleries, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York and “The Triumph of Painting; Abstract America,” at the Saatchi Gallery, London, England.

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