

With his paintings, wall paintings and sculptures Stéphane Dafflon enters into a fruitful dialog with the history of 20th-century abstraction, combining and inflecting the artistic legacy with mental images, musical rhythms, sign systems and codes from the worlds of advertising and popular culture.

The forms for his works are designed, deformed, combined and transposed on the screen of his computer: the corners of a square are rounded off, a circle morphs into an oval, a line splits while curving or becomes narrower, until all that is visible of it is a dot. In his art Dafflon confronts purely pictorial explorations with the everyday visual language of design, as applied directly in our quotidian surroundings.

In his exhibition at Galerie Francesca Pia, Stéphane Dafflon is showing recent paintings. The careful selection and combination of colors, the meticulous application of paint and the graphic play of lines lend the paintings an almost immaterial quality. Simple and plain, they appear like very basic, greatly reduced visual signs that disregard the boundaries of the picture surface. While Dafflon's individual pieces appear reduced and unobtrusive, a visual rhythm and sound of sorts is generated in the spaces he creates. The paintings seem to emanate undulations which are cast back and forth from one corner of the space to the other like an echo. The paintings in this synthetic, futuristic space might just as well be adorning the walls of the first-class waiting room of the spaceship Enterprise. Dafflon's works certainly seem to possess sufficient buoyancy to defy gravity.

As Stéphane Dafflon takes the liberty of slipping production methods and elements of commercial art and industrial design into abstract painting, fissures and shifts occur in the tradition of concrete art and, moreover, new possibilities of combining art and design are opened up. Born in Neyruz, Switzerland, in 1972, Stéphane Dafflon lives and works in Lausanne.

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