

Others have painted with brushes, with light, with sounds, even with metaphors. Wade Guyton paints with an inkjet printer. That sounds cool and ultra-smooth, but it's actually an unusual and exhausting affair. For such a printer, even an industrial model, is not made for such (ab)use. It is supposed to print paper. If it is fed with canvas, the printhead at times loses its grip; it produces elisions and streaks. The artist must therefore constantly keep watch over the printing process, readjust the canvas and even pull on it to achieve the desired image.

The printer can only process half of the 1.75 meters of the width he has chosen for the Cologne work. For which reason the artist folds the canvas lengthwise. When the one half has finished its run through the printer, he turns the canvas around and prints the other side. The monochrome black planes, stripes and bars, which Guyton has recently begun using very often, are computer-generated. These very elementary geometric forms are printed again and again on the white canvas. Whereby Guyton follows a strict plan; it is for instance important that the dimensions of each canvas be adapted to the technical details and the space in question. As noted, the cited width corresponds exactly to double the printer's format capacity, while the length of 7.75 meters is that of the usual commercial bolt of canvas. Although the width of all the artist's works produced on this printer is the same, the length is oriented to the architecture of the exhibition room, here the high facing wall of the large skylit hall at Museum Ludwig.

Not only does the unusual format accord with the space available, also the central motif, the monochrome bars, blend in. They echo the extremely long and narrow stairway vis-à-vis. Black and white emulate the steps. If you descend the stairs into the room, your own movement seems to set the stripes facing you into motion as well. The staircase is turned into a stage; Guyton's wall, in an abstract, possibly irritating way, takes up the movement of the visitors. Their approach and gait become somewhat theatrical and-if you think of the black fields as film strips-even cinematic. Grand film entrances on stairways-such as Gloria Swanson in *Sunset Boulevard*- come to mind. The movements that the canvas suggests are simultaneously those that the artist and canvas went through during its fabrication. The giant formats that Guyton has shown these past years have led him back to his artistic origins. After all he was, up to 2004, chiefly a sculptor. His elegant sculptures made of steel were preferably in "U" form, massive, at times standing, at times lying. His sculptures were called "drawings in space", which subsequently turned into "printer drawings". It is then not so far-fetched to speak of his extremely long, printed bolts of canvas as "printer sculptures". They redefine the space in which they hang, but they also redefine their medium. They lend something three-dimensional to paintings and graphic prints. And like all sculpture, they also influence and determine the visitor's movements through the room. Guyton's newer paintings, which he developed on the computer, herald the modernist motif par excellence: the monochrome. The classical

monochromes by Alexander Rodchenko or Robert Ryman had already served to reduce painting to its essence: color, canvas, frame. We can assume that Guyton's monochrome bars, even when they appear in larger complexes, have a similar objective to that of Rodchenko and Ryman, namely self-reflective painting. In Cologne their intense black consists of a mixture of all seven colors of the inkjet printer, that is, a non-color that sums up all colors. Guyton's artist's books give us the opportunity to locate his paintings in art history.

Part of the exhibition at Museum Ludwig is the artist's book *Zeichnungen für ein grosses Bild* (Publisher: Buchhandlung Walther König, 2010). It contains a collection of original book pages that Guyton extracted from catalogues and printed over with elementary geometric forms. He photographed a stack of the prints against his blue kitchen floor. As the reader turns each page in the book, Guyton takes a drawing from the stack. Like the paintings, here too the reader's movement is linked to that of the artist during production.

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