

Greene Naftali is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by the Los Angeles-based artist John Knight, his first solo exhibition in New York following his legendary shows at Colin de Lands American Fine Arts, Co. Since the early 1970s John Knight has dedicated his practice to mapping the intersections of art, design, and institutional power through a series of spatial interventions and graphic maneuvers. Following closely on the architectural implications of Minimalism, Knight belongs to a generation of artists that has consistently addressed the ideological valences of constructed space.

In his first exhibition for Greene Naftali, Knight turns to the museum in an age of cultural expansion. In the last several years it has become necessary for museums to expand not simply to house their ever-growing collections, but also to stake their claim in a global tourist trade characterized by spectacle and speculation alike. In his set of commemorative plates, Knight offers a variety of graphics depicting a varied collection of extensions and new building wings. Omitting the footprints of the original historic buildings, Knight depicts these expansion projects both lost in space and lacking a center, a collection of eccentric shapes deflated of spectacular power. Drawing a radical equivalence between all these buildings, Knight shows them to be less exceptional feats of mastery than the result of a standard, repetitive demand. Together, the plates function as a strange collection of formal glyphs, a lexicon of the morphology of our time that binds together graphic and product design with the autonomous practice of architecture.

For the installation of this project Knight has evacuated Greene Naftali's main gallery so as to turn it into a foyer replete with a sign advertising the exhibition. The sign bears the neologism Autotypes, a suggestive coinage that hints at a productive model informed by an unreflexive desire to create and expand. The installation of the plates themselves has been tucked away in two smaller rooms in back. Only a single vitrine containing a stack of plates emblazoned with footprints of the Guggenheim Museums ceaseless expansion is displayed in front. Somewhat precarious, the stack carries a faint echo of the Tower of Pisa as well as the original Guggenheim uptown. Removed from the wall and returned to their use value, these plates appear frozen on the brink of yet another celebration.

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