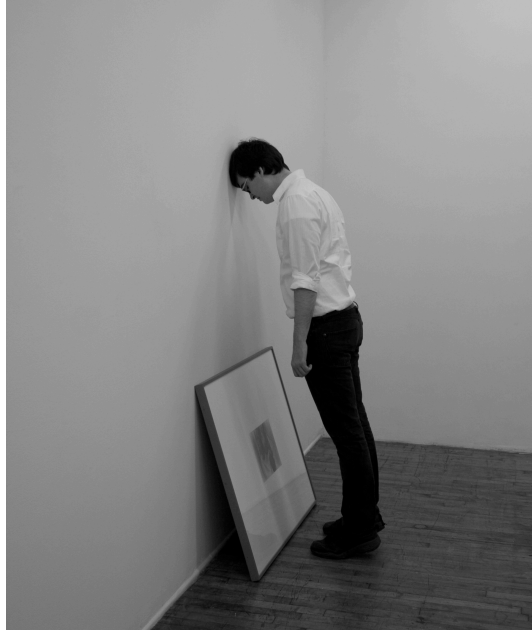


Wallspace

GAYLEN GERBER

October 21 - November 27, 2010

Opening reception: Thursday September 21st 6-8pm



Wallspace is pleased to present its first solo exhibition of work by Gaylen Gerber. For this exhibition, Gerber presents eleven artworks that span his artistic practice.

Gerber typically focuses on the normative aspects of visual language: the way we, as part of a shared culture, accept certain forms, colors and situations as institutional, or we take them for granted as impartial common ground. These visual norms act as grounds for all other forms of expression and we use them to register difference and create meaning. Gerber's work is often positioned so that it highlights the relationships between the frequently invisible normative aspects of visual language.

In this presentation, Gerber focuses attention specifically on artworks in which he uses gray as the "neutral" ground against which we form meaning. This gray is present in the painted frames employed in the earliest works in the exhibition, a series of genre images of a still life that were realized between 1980 and 1982. In these works the images appear to be distorted until they are viewed from an acute angle, at which point they appear normal. This shift in understanding as we move around the work focuses attention on the viewer's activity and underscores the performative character of both Gerber's practice and of any interpretation.

Untitled, a painting from the 1980's that also employs a genre image of a still life, is painted in a single shade of gray; the image is only visible through very subtle shifts in the painted surface. Gerber conflates the ground and the expressive qualities of the image by making them literally the same color, suggesting permeability between these elements. As we try to differentiate the still life from its situation, everything, including the light in the room and the whole of the painting's context that would normally become its background, remains in the foreground of our perception and understanding.

Wallspace

In the *Supports*, the most recent of the artworks included in this exhibition, Gerber applies gray paint to one side of two remnants (which are commonly known as souvenirs) from Daniel Buren's work *Crossing Through the Colors* from 2006. With these souvenirs, Gerber creates artworks that raise our awareness of the permeability between artists and their practices. In one instance, Gerber's gray paint obscures Buren's trademark stripes, and in the other we see Gerber's gray through the stripes. Thus, Buren's stripes and Gerber's neutral gray are positioned interchangeably as both ground and expression. Similarly, it becomes apparent that Gerber's *Untitled* still life functions as both ground and image when Stephen Prina layers black enamel spray paint on top of it, focusing attention on the way all artistic expressions act as grounds against which other expressions are perceived in addition to functioning as expressions in their own right.

This conscious exchange between elements in Gerber's practice accentuates the conditional quality of any interpretation and illuminates the role of the ground in determining value. By heightening and even confusing perception Gerber returns us to an individual visceral experience that suspends easy apprehension.

Gaylen Gerber has exhibited widely. Recent solo exhibitions and cooperative projects include: Kunstverein Ruhr, Essen, Germany; Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg; The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois; Neues Museum Weserburg Bremen, Bremen, Germany; Kunsthalle Bern, Bern, Switzerland; Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain de Bourgogne and Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon, France.

For further information or for images please contact elizabeth@wallspacegallery.com