

Gaylen Gerber
March 23 – April 21, 2007
Daniel Hug Gallery
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Daniel Hug is pleased to present the second solo exhibition at the gallery of works by Gaylen Gerber.

In this exhibition Gerber presents six new works. Gerber's practice is regularly situated in relation to the work of other artists: in this exhibition, that of Daniel Buren, Heimo Zobernig and Tyson Reeder.

In previous exhibitions at the gallery Gerber has addressed ideas surrounding perception and particularly the role of context in perception. Gerber's paintings act as the contextual ground for the expressions of other artists. For his current exhibition, Gerber continues to employ his work as the contextual ground for other artworks but he also specifically foregrounds his ground as an expression itself.

Gerber is interested in the normative aspects of visual language: the way we, as part of a shared culture, accept certain forms, colors, etc. as institutional or we take them for granted as neutral common ground. These visual norms act as grounds for all other forms of expression and we use them to register difference and create meaning. His *Supports* are positioned so that they highlight these relationships by representing the often invisible normative aspects of visual language, as suggested by their original "neutral" gray color.

The paintings in the *Support* series typically begin as grey monochrome canvases painted by Gerber. Gerber then gives these paintings to other artists to use as supports for their work; in this case, Heimo Zobernig and Tyson Reeder painted their work directly on top of Gerber's paintings. In one painting Zobernig repaints Gerber's original ground an alternate gray and on another he repaints it white, thus questioning the grounds' claims to neutrality. By contrast, through his emphasis of the painting's image, Reeder addresses the "neutrality" of Gerber's *Support* in an entirely different manner. In *Support/Dead Van* we witness Reeder's attempts to match Gerber's gray, and then to obscure it, and ultimately to incorporate it. This exchange between image and ground especially showcases the fragility of both Reeder's image and the unexpected conditional quality of Gerber's ground.

Daniel Buren uses a signature motif of alternating bands of white and color as a means of relating art to its situation rather than presenting his work as standing alone. Gerber has painted his *Support* directly on top of a section of Buren's striped motif from his work *Crossing through the Colors*, which was realized in Chicago in 2006; such fragments of Buren's works are referred to as souvenirs. In this way, Gerber foregrounds his *Support* against the Buren souvenir. This emphasizes the *Support* as

expression as well as ground, and emphasizes the souvenir as both an object and, more importantly in this situation, as a context for Gerber's expression. It is central to Buren's practice that his work acts as the ground against which other expressions are perceived. This idea is one of the starting points for Gerber's practice, and his gesture in *Support* acknowledges the exchange between the two artists' practices based on their shared interest in acknowledging the necessity of a ground for perception to occur.

Gaylen Gerber has exhibited widely. Recent solo exhibitions and cooperative projects include: The Musee d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg, Luxembourg; The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois; The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois; and the FRAC-Bourgogne and Musee des Beaux-Arts, Dijon, France.