ALMINE RECH

Peter Halley
New Paintings

Dec 8, 2023 — Jan 20, 2024 | Shanghai

Almine Rech Shanghai is pleased to announce the distinguished New York Neo-Geo artist Peter Halley's second solo exhibition with the gallery, marking his second exposition in mainland China. The exhibition is on view from December 8, 2023 to January 20, 2024.

Comprising works exclusively conceived in 2023, the collection demonstrates the artist's enduring exploration of the interplay between geometric abstraction and his distinctive synthetic color palette. Halley's artistic philosophy conceives abstract art as a historical progression within society and its narrative intricately interwoven through the organization of compartmentalized spaces and the formal systems constituting the abstract world.

Halley's recent paintings diverge from the rectangular conventions prevalent in his 1980s oeuvre. Departing from his iconic geometric formulation, these compositions continue to inhabit a realm of contradiction, adeptly balancing rationalist geometry with whimsical and irreverent explorations in color and texture. The canvases, rendered through meticulously painted grid-like compositions, evoke a sense of a lost dimension, where the demarcation between the physical and virtual realms becomes blurred. This resonance with Paul Virilio's post-modern urban theory, wherein space and time compress to form intricate networks, lays the groundwork for Halley's linguistic exploration of abstract art.

Within the context of a technologically wired urban space, the juxtaposition of synthetic colors against rigid structures in Halley's paintings mirrors the flattened reality of our technologically mediated existence. Emblematic of Neo-Geometric Conceptualism, Halley's work plays with visual-spatial relationships that are both disorienting and captivating. Notably, the exhibition features two prominent pieces, *Machine* and *Checkmate*, which cast a profound psychological impact on the viewers. As the titles suggested, *Machine* conveys a sense of order and control through its structured appearance, while the term "Checkmate," borrowed from chess, denotes the game's conclusion, signifying the imminent capture of the opponent's king. The color fields in these paintings extend beyond mere aesthetics, delving into a purposeful exploration of psychological composition.

Halley's practice transcends visual aesthetics to serve as poignant reflections on the contemporary urban condition, unraveling the intricacies of our technologically influenced existence. The accelerated pace of modern life has seen the displacement of physical spaces by telecommunication, reshaping both our living and working environments. Halley's creations provide visual narratives that, through his multidisciplinary approach, fuse contemporary physics, architecture, aesthetic theory, technological critique, and sociology to shed light on the impact of hyperreality on our spatial perceptions. Echoing Virilio, Halley's work portrays contemporary space as a web of interactive informational networks, effectively ensnaring us in a prison house of illusory transcendence.

— Yuan Fuca, curator, writer, and Kadist's Associate Program Director for China