

Geometry of the Absurd: Recent Paintings by Peter Halley

November 8, 2015 – February 21, 2016

Using distinctive materials including Day-Glo acrylics and Roll-a-Tex, Peter Halley's paintings present variations of geometric forms that he has designated as prisons, cells, and conduits. With their visual associations with modern and contemporary architecture and design, electronic and digital models, and social systems, Halley's paintings have long predicted—and continue to serve as metaphors for—a vast range of cultural phenomena. In particular, his intense and often dazzling combination of colors and connecting shapes may be perceived as allegories for many of the physical and conceptual elements the Information Age.

Halley is considered a progenitor of Neo-conceptual painting, and rose to prominence in the 1980s alongside artists Sarah Charlesworth, Jeff Koons, Haim Steinbach, Philip Taaffe, and others. As writer Demetrio Paparoni stated, unlike these artists, Halley “was able to down the barriers [between] painting, sculpture, [and] readymades.”* Halley is also recognized for his writing—he has produced many critical texts throughout his career; and served as the publisher of *index magazine*, a publication covering indie culture, from 1996-2005.

Geometry of the Absurd: Recent Paintings by Peter Halley features eight iconic paintings by the artist produced from 2007 to 2015, representing his first solo museum exhibition in the Western United States. The exhibition title references the plethora of “open” societal systems that farcically disguise closed loops, or in the case of Halley's work, confined cells. The paintings selected for the exhibition share in common a distinctive double-stack composition—two prisons or cells, one precariously suspended above another. This motif, appearing in Halley's work in the post-millennial period, is examined for the first time in this exhibition.

* Demetrio Paparoni, *Halley's Heresy*, *Peter Halley: Maintain Speed*, 2000: D.A.P. (Distributed Art Publishers)