

PETER HALLEY *Drawings*

This exhibition brings together a sample of works by American artist Peter Halley (New York, 1953), two series of recent drawings of small (11 x 8.5 in) and large (22 x 16 in) format. For Halley, a drawing is not simply a preliminary sketch, but an essential step of his creative process. Contrary to his large format paintings, his typically computerized small-scale drawings reveal signs, traces and occasional stains, of the artist's hand.

This exhibition presents a range of works that capture variations of the cell theme – an engaging subject that has caught Halley's attention since the early eighties. He originally produced the cell as an analogy to a prison, a critic to an idealist and formalist Modernism. But, the idea of the "cell" grew in Halley's eyes. The artist started exploring implicit differentiations of the meaning: from a concrete idea – like an empty room – to a broader visual reinterpretation of the concept – in the field of new technology –. The notion of geometry as a social metaphor has served as the starting point for his art. Linear conduits connect the isolated cells to each other. Overall, Halley's work presents a contemporary metaphor of urban existence. Formally, the cells seem to be like window frames divided by horizontal and vertical lines. Further, the intersections created by these straight lines are covered with a uniform mass layer of color and different textures. Consequently, the final effect distorts the viewer's illusion of perspective towards the three-dimensional images, playing with the concepts of normal and inverted depth. Halley's understanding of formal analysis is suggested in his control over the elements of art and principles of design. Within this context, the artist chooses to exploit the different effects created from varying the proportions, superposition or combination of his prisons and monochromatic panels.

The visual impact of Halley's work is huge, immediate and explosive. This is partly due to his use of scale, color and sharp outline. Halley creates compositions that use Day-Glo and acrylic paints and areas of stucco texture to create subtle or brilliant effects. Despite his clear roots in Pop Art and Minimalism, the artist refers to his own practice as an intuitive project that gives way to a separate living space for his imagination.

Besides the painter's appearances in numerous group shows, including the Venice Biennale, Halley has had numerous solo exhibitions among other venues at the Musée d'Art Contemporain in Bordeaux, Museum of Modern Art in New York and Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art in Japan. In 2002 he was appointed associate professor and Director of Graduate Studies in Painting and Printmaking at Yale University Art School.

For further information or for images, please contact us.