

GALERIE ANDREA CARATSCH

PRESS RELEASE

PETER HALLEY – WORKS FROM THE 80's

12 November 2010 - 29 January 2011

Galerie Andrea Caratsch will be showing an exhibition of works from the 80's by the American artist Peter Halley from 12 November 2010 to 29 January 2011.

In 1981, one year after returning to New York, Peter Halley creates his first seminal works. The experience of urban alienation, isolation and psychological stress are reflected in gloomily painted rectangles and lines, depicting walls, cells and prisons. "I stopped trying to pile up some sort of human figure and began painting brick walls instead. Just like at home. (...) I was working alone at home, listening to the radio, turning on electric lights, being able to flush the toilet, talk on the phone, turn on the air conditioner." Halley becomes aware that all these natural things – air, light, water, noise – are brought to him through pipes and conduits, and that this creates connections and even communication with the outside world. In his pictures, conduits connect the cells and spaces with each other or simply with the outside world. From the representation of an isolated object – the cell or prison – Halley moves on to the representation of a system of isolation, in which the urban being of the 20th century lives: cells and conduits. "By the time I had codified that system of imagery, I began to feel that I had come up with a kind of paradigm, or model, or representation of a very basic kind of space, and spacial experience in our society." This underlying geometric grid has served as the starting point for Peter Halley's entire artistic practice to this day.

Another increasingly characteristic and important element of his work is the use of *Roll-a-Tex*, a material which adds texture to the application of colours to make them stand out from the background, and the addition of so-called *Day-Glo* colours, fluorescent colours that further intensify the artificial and science-fiction-like aspect of his works. Hence his works are no longer necessarily oppressive but can virtually glow, glitter and be "glam" and "pop", depending on the artist's frame of mind and feelings.

As an art theoretician, Peter Halley is one of the most important thinkers of the Neo-Geo (*Neo Geometrical Conceptualists*) generation of the 80's. In his ground-breaking article "Crisis in Geometry" (1984), he calls for a re-consideration of geometry as a reference for modernity. However, in spite of his theoretical reflections the immediate and instantly recognizable effect of his paintings is of utmost importance to Peter Halley as an artist. "I want to make something explosive and immediate. And hopefully explosive and immediate each time you go by and take a quick look at it."

Born in New York City in 1953, Peter Halley studied at Yale and received his MFA from the University of New Orleans. Since 1980, Halley has lived and worked in New York. His work as an artist is commonly associated with minimalism and neo-conceptual art. Halley also works as an author, publisher and lecturer. Since 2002, Halley has been the Director of Graduate Studies in Painting and Printmaking at the Yale University School of Art in New Haven, Connecticut. His works can be found at the Museum of Modern Art and in the collection of the Guggenheim Museum in New York as well as at the Tate Modern in London.

The gallery is open Monday to Friday 10 am to 6 pm
and Saturday 11 am to 5 pm.