

PATTERN RECOGNITION

Exhibition January 28 - March 18, 2017
Opening Saturday, January 28 at 3 pm

Peter Halley, Herbert Hamak, Valérie Jouve, Marco Maggi, Dean Monogenis, Raha Raissnia, Lucas Samaras, Michael Scott, Takis, Dan Walsh

Parkaboy, one of the characters in William Gibson's cult book, ironically said, "Homo sapiens is about pattern recognition.¹ *Pattern Recognition* means to identify structures, construct classifications or a system of classifications, recognize the theory behind the everyday, and deduce the rhythms created by the urban crossroads of cities. Decipher building facades, streets, avenues, squares, and deconstruct them into fundamental and abstract components that repeat, multiply, and permutate, to reveal how architectural shapes resemble the vocabulary born from the inspirational elements of minimalism. The cubes, rectangles, grids, and single lines that intersect and overlap, as well as the forms they comprise, create a mathematically, geometrically, and rhythmically-perfect architecture.

The conceptual and iconic patterns seem to invade with the persisting obsession Peter Halley's paintings in order to build a fixed and defined vocabulary concentrated on three pictorial elements which are simultaneously abstract and rooted in social context: the square represents the "cell," the grid conjures the idea of "prison" and the "conduit" refers to the notion of circulation inside a closed system. The geometric system of cells and grids, at once isolated and linked by conduits, is a metaphor for contemporary society and an attempt to mimic the spatial organization of social behaviors: it is about urban layouts, geometrical city plans and traffic, the unending highways that envelope them, and the publicity billboards that hang over them. The components – constantly reimagined and reinvented in Peter Halley's vocabulary – assume different volumes, but echo the geometric and repetitive forms common in Herbert Hamak's artworks. The "cells" are transformed into voluminous cubes (made from a mixture of pigments in resin and wax) and are then molded on a conventionally-hung canvas. The "conduits" convert into columns or even into angles cut from a square or a rectangle, like the shape in *Malachit Synthetic*. The painting (as rendered in this space) takes on a sculptural dimension and becomes a mass of light; the artist's method allows for painting to transition into architectural forms.

Dan Walsh's painting entitled *Key* is constructed from basic element: through its repetition, an imperfectly geometric grid becomes the anchor for the canvas. His multiplication builds a structured and rhythmic façade, a game of construction where the concrete blocks pile together one on top of another. His use of color – less and less translucent and progressively opaque – softens this strict repetition and increasingly supports the notion of the grid as a predominant form. Repetition *and* difference, to use a Deleuzian formula. The juxtaposition of the black grids organizes the surface of the canvas in a way that also transforms the background color of dark blue into a grid that encircles and defines all that it contains.

Marco Maggi's artworks use a similar logic as Dan Walsh's key. *Turner Boxes* – inspired by Le Corbusier, Van der Rohe, Gerhy's architecture – are placed on a shelf that mimics the shape of the grid, as if it were trying to organize the boxes while being was its frame and structural support. The boxes, in turn, contain stacks of hundreds pages that are meticulously cut-up. The cutouts are done in such a way that they no longer look like opaque, white pages but as grids, and following a similar logic, become shelves themselves – the grid in a grid – and contain something of their self inside them. Their contents – the cutouts of complex geometric figures – seem suspended in the cells drawn, configured, and outlined by the grid. However, in order to see them and to

penetrate this myopic world of infinitely small things (such as the *microchip*), one must approach closely and examine each detail, one by one, all the while keeping in mind the whole. Is it the aerial view of a perfectly geometrical (and thus impossible) city?

The grid reappears in the strange and fantastical urban landscape of Dean Monogenis's *Age of Sail*. It is much less present and becomes more delicate. There is neither repetition nor stability. Here, the yellow grid is broken, twisted, and in parts diffused. It becomes almost unstable, as if it is captured at the moment of "self-deconstruction," the moment when its shape begins to degrade into nothingness. Asserting itself with great trepidation, it is sometimes a fragmented and strange architecture, composed from the incongruous juxtaposition of ancient ruins and an abandoned modern façade; sometimes its absence highlights the utopic constructions that it tries to hide.

Raha Raissnia produces complex compositions from simultaneously recurrent and evolving forms that teeter between abstraction and figuration. The delicate structure of lines gives shape to the canvas, thus creating abstract spaces that are both transparent and impervious. However, the figurative elements, such as the quasi-ephemeral contours, or the almost elusive impressions, cobble together the mathematically-constructed structures. From time to time, it is possible to detect the outlines of a window, a building facade, and even a construction site. Because of the composition, Raissnia's canvases resemble the structure of a fugue, where the musical theme slowly changes through variations, repetitions, and superposition.

Michael Scott's *House of Abstinence* also depicts a landscape that is both figurative and abstract: a house appears suspended in a geometric space. The house, as well as the space that surrounds it, are methodically deconstructed into building blocks, as if they were generated by a computer system, juxtaposing the black and white bands as if they were 0s and 1s in a binary system. The persistent repetition of fine vertical lines is balanced by thicker diagonal bands, which creates a very intense optical illusion that stops the gaze from settling on one form. The surface is so saturated, so dense that the perceptive act becomes almost impossible. At once architectural and purely abstract, clear yet subtle, the artwork is in the space between "the sites and non-sites, sights and non-sights," to cite the words of Bob Nickas.²

In Valérie Jouve's series *Les façades*, the photographs of modern and well-defined buildings separate themselves with their recurrent and rhythmic pattern. For example, the endless repetition of uniform windows on building facades becomes an abstract pattern translated into architectural components that question how a skyline is constructed. The facades are halfway to abstraction and echo the purist and minimalist shapes of Lucas Samaras's impact cubes. Are they building blocks stacked high or tiny renditions of skyscrapers?

In this same landscape, both abstract and architectural, is Takis's *Signal*. Disproportionate, elegant, delicate, it wavers, searching for its balance. But it never stops flashing light, as if to organize traffic inside this strange and geometrical city, built on abstract patterns, that repeat, slowly evolve, and then repeat again.

¹ William Gibson, *Pattern recognition*, 2003

² Robert Nickas, "September 22, 1990" in the catalog *Michael Scott: New Paintings, September 22-October 20, 1990*, Ed. Tony Shafrazi Gallery, 1990.

Xippas Gallery Paris

108 rue Vieille du Temple 75003 Paris

www.xippas.com

Tuesday - Friday : 10 am – 1 pm and 2 pm – 7 pm

Saturday : 10 am – 7 pm

Upcoming Exhibition:

Pablo Siquier

March 25 – May 13, 2017

Contact press :

Olga Ogorodova

press@xippas.com

+33 1 40 27 05 55