

LENNON, WEINBERG, INC.

514 West 25th Street, New York, NY 10001 Tel. 212 941 0012 Fax. 212 929 3265
info@lennonweinberg.com www.lennonweinberg.com

The Ghost in the Machine

Curated by Stephen Westfall

John McLaughlin, Nicholas Krushenick, Don Christensen, Harriet Korman, Don Voisine, Stephen Westfall, Jennifer Riley, Rachel Beach, Jackie Meier, Thomas Raggio

Opening reception Thursday, June 23, 6-8 pm, exhibition continues through August 19, 2011

Lennon, Weinberg is pleased to present a group exhibition that includes a diverse group of artists engaged with geometric abstraction. Historical figures John McLaughlin and Nicholas Krushenick participate in a contemporary interchange among mid-career painters Don Christensen, Harriet Korman and Don Voisine, along with younger painters Jennifer Riley, sculptor Rachel Beach, Jackie Meier and Thomas Raggio, and of course Stephen Westfall himself. Westfall selected these artists for their free and felicitous approaches to the inherent orderliness of geometry.

Westfall wrote this brief essay to outline some of his ideas about the issues at the core of the exhibition:

By the end of the 19th century the invisible forces powering the universe and supporting the surfaces of our visible and tangible realm had moved from conjectures grounded in faith to materially measurable phenomenon. The speed of light was calculable; the electric field could be diagrammed; economic complexities could be charted; photography could capture entire worlds of texture and temporalities missed by the eye; information could be delivered seemingly instantly cross the planet; and, in the wake of such astounding developments geometry stirred and shifted its role in art from the face of sacred harmonies to a less purely exalted state, in effect beaten like the Velveteen Rabbit into the hard knock life of early Cubism and back again into the idealisms of Malevich and Mondrian. Geometry was finally “real.” Minimalism was simply a confirmation of that fact. The funny thing was that by then the “real” as a tangible presence was already threatened with destabilization from Pop’s intoxication with the Sign. Pop was like an undertow pulling the real back into an ocean of simulations, but the obdurate, Romantic material presence of painting kept bobbing to the surface. Maybe the energy lies in the tension between Sign and real presence, between gravity and lightness.

I’m interested in artists who feel that geometric abstraction is a practiced gesture that can wither when notions of purity, or even a steady rationality gain the upper hand. The artists in this show are impure, infected with the world’s surrogates and inauthenticities while making the wager that their work will be more durable for it. There is Pop here, and animism: a torqued geometry that understands it needs to keep moving to dodge reification. These painters and one sculptor also know that while interior illusion is inevitable, it is also a sideshow; that the real drama is in the actual space out in front of the painting and surrounding the sculpture. What is the work doing in that space, to that space? And if it isn’t exactly funny, the work is full of mirth, even glee. Some people think that artists deploy geometry as an austerity. It ain’t necessarily so. All the work here stands for more than one thing: swoony craft, optical dazzle, compression and expansion; and an invocation of geometry’s traditional role as giving form to spirituality, expressed here as spiritedness.

Summer Hours during July and August are Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 6pm. Please contact Kathleen Mallaney at 212 941 0012 or kathleen@lennonweinberg.com for more information.