

## **Gaylen Gerber**

January 28– March 26, 2005

Galerie Susanna Kulli

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Gallery Susanna Kulli is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Gaylen Gerber.

In this exhibition Gerber combines two groups of works that are both part of Gerber's *Support* series: paintings made in cooperation with Austrian artist Heimo Zobernig and paintings made in cooperation with Swiss artist Adrian Schiess.

Gerber's *Support* paintings begin as grey monochrome canvases painted by Gerber. Gerber then gives these paintings to other artists to use as supports for their own work; in this case, Adrian Schiess and Heimo Zobernig realized their works directly on top of Gerber's paintings. Gerber is interested in the normative aspects of visual language: the way we, as part of a shared culture, accept certain forms, colors, etc. as institutional or we take them for granted as neutral common ground. These visual norms act as grounds for all other forms of expression and we use them to register difference and create meaning. The original "neutral" grey of his supports suggests the often invisible normative aspects of visual language, and Zobernig's and Schiess' works are cast as the figurative element to this ground, making the ground visible.

Zobernig's work has much in common with Gerber's in that it draws attention to the structuring of painting through slight divergences from its conventions. In choosing to juxtapose his work with Zobernig's, Gerber is establishing a reflexive exchange between both artists' practices based on their shared interest in acknowledging the necessity of a ground for the perception of significance. In these paintings, Zobernig has called into question the "neutrality" of Gerber's grey by painting one canvas a different grey, and some white (another "neutral").

In contrast, Schiess' paintings reflect a seemingly anarchic play of colors based on his own desire and the pleasure he derives in applying paint. While both Zobernig's and Schiess' works reflect preoccupation with the surface of the painting and with the activity of painting, they reflect two very different models for making art. For Gerber the relation of these two artistic models to each other and to his own "neutral" grey ground is representative of two of the parameters that define his practice.

Gaylen Gerber lives and works in Chicago. He has exhibited widely including recent solo exhibitions and cooperative projects at The Art Institute of Chicago, The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, The Donald Young Gallery, Chicago, Daniel Hug Gallery, Los Angeles and the FRAC-Bourgogne, Dijon.