

Graham Lister

Barrier – Breakdown – Repeat

Graham Lister's works approach the topic of transfer from the sense of its boundaries. The exhibition's main motif is the diamond pattern of chain link fences. It is painted with dark lines on rolls of bright white paper and works as a repeating design element or even a totem. A fence is a flat and straight structure which frames and controls spaces. Accordingly, this exhibition deals with the tension of flatness and space, explored by Lister within the demarcations and overlaps of different arts and media.

The subtle reduction to the constant diamond pattern highlights the special qualities of Graham Lister's painted lines. These lines return repetitively, but become visible as a manufactured, irregular, and unique demarcation; not a result of mechanical reproduction but an act of production for every single line.

The exhibition not only subverts the concept of a fixed and final boundary, it transforms our expectations of what painting is.

The viewers' interaction with the artworks has a particularly spatial dimension, for example when the artist hangs up his canvas on the wall like a stiff coat, instead of stretching it on a frame. Or, he unexpectedly unrolls it from the flat vertical wall into the room, where it forms a sculpture – the unseen transformation from wall painting to room installation!

This handling of materials and media combines two moments: (1) "Look, this is all handcrafted material, art as craft in the middle of your (everyday) way and it is an infinite task that never finds an easy end". And (2) "Look, canvas and paper can also be installations or sculptures. This means that you also experience them in multiple ways, because as you co-exist with them in space you are forced to behave spatially towards them." Neither art nor any boundaries are sacred here in the dogmatic sense: in this way you can experience the crossing of boundaries (of genres, spaces, and ideas).

The viewers' point of view and perspectives are decisive for this – in this exhibition, the painterly line is unexpectedly formed, the stretched surface is transformed into an irregular landscape with bends and protrusions. It is made impossible to identify the pattern as a simple predetermined repetition. Instead, a kind of playful exploration emerges: Is the paper sculpture also a small cave? And do you share the humor when the artist arranges his border motif by wrapping multiple layers of plastic temporary construction fencing on stretchers and seems to say: "You can do it, too! It's a construction job without end. Every time the form changes, the whole thing changes!"

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