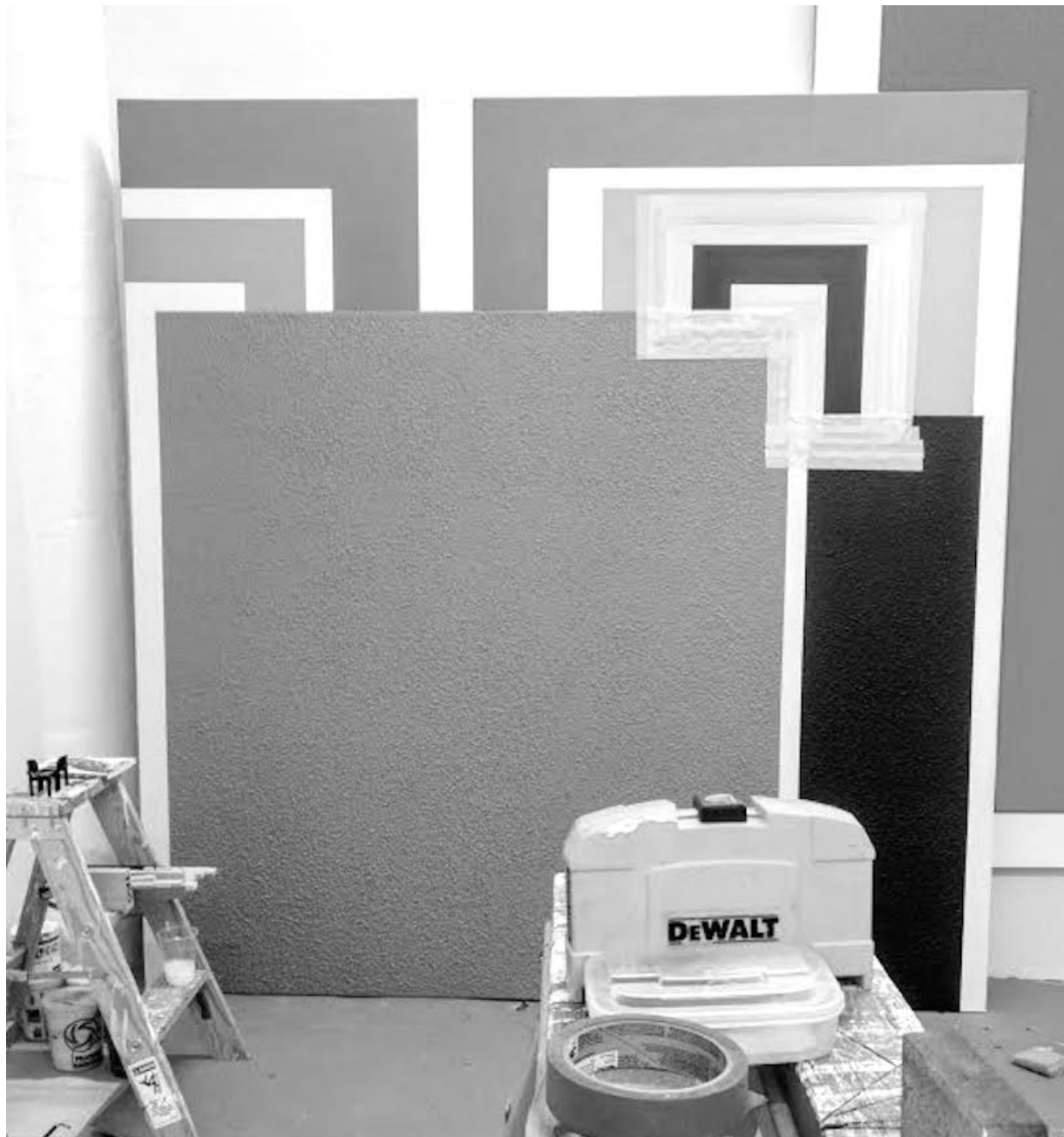


Adapter_Adapted &etc.
Greenspon Gallery
September 2017
New York



Mike Zahn
Adapter_Adapted, 2017

Acrylic and acoustic silicate on linen
78 x 144 inches (Detail)
Studio view

Mike Zahn's large format diptych *Adapter_Adapted* is a rendering and / or re-rendering of Peter Halley's painting *Adapter*. Halley's gleaming 1998 canvas in silver, bronze, gold, copper, stainless, gunmetal, and black appeared on the block at Phillips in 2009. Zahn, formerly Halley's studio manager, dragged the image file of that work off the auction house website to his desktop, printed a JPEG of it on standard letter-size paper, and fabricated the image twice, each to near scale save the bottom predella panel and boxy volume of *Adapter*'s deep stretcher. The framing edge in Zahn's version becomes a thin white strip, somewhat like that seen on an old-fashioned photo, or a new-fangled Instagram post. Faithfully painted in acrylic on linen, yet left 'unfinished', Zahn's *Adapter_Adapted* registers the tonal shifts indicative of digital translation and analog output. Like many things we behold from the electronic realm, such as thumbnails of art historical treasures or lush orchestral music played through an iPhone speaker, the details are all slightly off. As we grow comfortable with the conditional, the provisional, and the approximate, image corruption, loss of fidelity, and a diminished power become less bothersome given the ability to see, hear, and know whatever it is we choose to Google.

1 thought on “Vilem Flusser”

Pingback: [Junk for Code](#)

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Mike Zahn

One Thought on Vilèm Flusser, 2017

Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG)

49KB 1440 x 1440 RGB

Preview (Default)

As a book is adapted for the screen, so the screen adapts the world. Reflecting this commutability, Zahn’s practice finds itself within a new genre where quotation has succeeded appropriation, and abstraction becomes mimesis. For him, the act of rephrasing is more important than that of reproduction. At this moment when expression and activism are

so tightly bound, his rejection of any subjective declarative content may be read as a deeply political refusal. *What do you represent?* This exhibition is balanced by the hanging of monumental to medium format monochrome paintings, like *Adapter_Adapted* each framed with a white border, their singularity mitigated by similarity. The hues throughout are reminiscent of Post-It notes and Mac laptops, mobile phones and peripheral devices. There is no image here to be co-opted, or likewise lifted by nefarious marketers intent upon manipulating 'authenticity' as the ultimate branding tool.



Mike Zahn
BAGS, 2017

Vinyl, glass, aluminum, copper, and rubber
28 x 20 inches
Studio view

Appearing unassumingly amidst the rich chromaticism of *Adapter_Adapted & etc.* is a red vinyl adhesive cutout of an uppercase A. It is set in quotation marks, or rather placed as a quotation within a quotation, overlaid with a disconnected, unlit neon sign which reads BAGS. Zahn has recently created a number of 'A' works, fashioning for himself a kind of aside which he can tweak within any given situation. In the context of an exhibition, this letterform invokes the oft air-quoted "Art with a capital 'A'", an insinuation which throws the status of the artist's entire body of work into question. Perhaps it may also be read as a text-based emoticon, with its plain countenance suggesting the arrangement of features on a face? Either way, the 'A' slides from association to association, there and back again, adapting to whatever circumstance might arise.