

LAMONTAGNE GALLERY

Jeff Perrott

New Construction

September 9 – October 22, 2022

Opening Reception:

Friday, September 9, 5 – 8 p.m



Construction (Phrmakon), 2019 – 2020, Acrylic on linen, 60" x 110"

I care about an experience opening a space of thought that wouldn't otherwise be available—

but it's not in an essay or any of this talking about the work.

The space of thought is in the experience.

No, the experience is the space of thought."

--Jeff Perrott, in conversation with Steve Locke, June 2022

LaMontagne Gallery is pleased to present new paintings by Jeff Perrott. Called *New Construction*, the exhibition picks up, develops, complicates, and problematizes the artist's exploration of vibrantly colored hard-edged geometry forged in his 2019 show *Construction*, also at LaMontagne Gallery.

Accompanied by a full color hard-bound catalogue featuring a conversation between Perrott and well-known, award winning artist and writer Steve Locke, the exhibition begins with a reception with the artist on Friday, September 9, and continues through Saturday, October 22.

For Perrott, the title and organizing concept of his project—Construction—refers to more than quasi-architectural space. “It begins with our construction of form through sensation and perception,” the artist says, “which allows for the imaginative construction of space—given the ambiguity of form—and finally lands us in the construction of a space of thought.”

The hinged, folding/unfolding geometric planes of Perrott’s New Construction works develop ambiguous—often seemingly impossible, gravityless—architectural spaces. For the artist, these forms, rendered in bold and subtle colors as opaque, transparent, linear and as lit form, represent “spaces of possibility, imaginative constructions that point past our familiar experience and suggest a more open, non-hierarchical experience. At the same time, they seek to address a very concrete real.”

“In the New Construction paintings that clear empty background is gone,” Perrott says to Locke in the catalogue conversation, comparing his newer works to the works in the 2019 Construction show, “it’s more crowded and full, more immersive...more contested and contingent. Larger planes keep shifting and re-framing smaller elements, the line structures attaching to various forms are relentless. If the first body of work offered a sense of difference in a figure, against a ground, the newer work maybe presents a sense of social difference, a kind of contested social space where different elements continually intervene on and interact with each other. It’s a kind of convergence of very different elements, each seemingly trying to create a different space.”

His maximal color environments and the often violent exchange of geometric forms of diverse scale, weight and handling teem the picture plane with seemingly unlimited opportunities for invention.

Adding to the multiplicity of possibility, the artist employs a chance random walk process to drive the successive folds of the geometry.

This use of contingency is essential to the development and meaning of the work. As Perrott notes to Locke in their catalogue conversation, “There’s a plan, which includes the invariance of the geometry, the intuition of color, and chance—contingency—so I know and I don’t know where things are going. It’s a mix of chance, pre-given structure, and intuition—a negotiation among all three. They always exceed the process and the ideas, but are also constrained by the the process at the same time.”

Rejecting hard distinctions between form and content, experience and thought, and abstraction and representation, Perrott's Construction paintings eschew explicit discursive content, placing faith in the content of form and direct experience to provoke and undergird thought. "The specific choices all determine a definite field in which an indeterminate something can happen, but not anything. It could be different, but not anything different. The choices, the constraints, are important. It's in the tension between indeterminacy and the constraints, that the something else, the invention, happens."



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