

MIDWAY CONTEMPORARY ART
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Anthony Pearson

September 13th – October 25th, 2008

Midway Contemporary Art is pleased to announce a solo-exhibition of work by the Los Angeles-based artist Anthony Pearson. This exhibition will feature a new series of silver gelatin prints, digital photographs, and bronze sculptures. There will be an opening reception for the public on Saturday, September 13th from 7-9PM. The exhibition continues through October 25th.

Pearson's work over the past few years has been an exploration of perceptual and historical aspects of photography and abstraction. Working in both chemical and electronic processes, Pearson has melded these photographic methods in a highly personal manner to suggest that the concerns of the analog and digital are not as disparate as supposed. His ongoing series of solarized, silver gelatin prints exploit elements of chance and variability through a highly controlled three-part process. Pearson begins by constructing tableaus of foil, spray-paint, and ripped paper through both additive and subtractive methods, alluding to precedents such as the *décollage* of the Nouveau Realistes. After photographing details of these drawings and constructions, the prints are then solarized in the darkroom during a process by which tonality of the image is inverted to varying degrees through a brief exposure to white light. While the small scale of these photographs could be read as referencing reproductive plates of gestural mid-century paintings, the unique nature of each photograph elaborates a highly personalized language that builds upon historical strains of abstraction.

In contrast, the artist's large acrylic-mounted digital photographic prints evidence an interest in the viewer's experience of time and space. From the lamination of the photographs to their reflective acrylic surfaces, these monochromatic works suggest an almost meditative, minimalist concern with phenomenology and the subtle perception of one's relationship to the object. Unlike the silver-gelatin prints, Pearson will often position these works in serial groupings hung low to the ground thus incorporating the photographs into their surroundings.

The foci of each of these images are large circles of white that radiate outward into monochromatic fields. These points of light are manipulated reproductions of lens flares or are shapes of light that are generated by light waves reacting in aberrant ways with the film or digital sensors in cameras. Highly atmospheric, and at times humorous, the photographs suggest a sense of realism within the accidents of photography that usually highlight its artifice. Like the solarized photographs, these digital prints are mediated images that begin to lose their connections to their origins; they degrade with each click of the "save" command as the computer discards redundant information through what is termed lossy compression. The resulting pixilated abstractions are arrested at a point where they exist uneasily as copies. Yet it is important to note throughout all of the artist's current work, there is no traditional editioning of the photographs.

Also on view at Midway are four totemic and slab-like bronze sculptures that have recently been incorporated into Pearson's practice. Serving as atmospheric foils to the photographic counterparts which accompany them, these "arrangements" heighten the uncertain relationships between object and

image. With a juxtaposition of highly reflective and matte finishes, the sculptures pick up many of the concerns of his solarizations. Much like the staging of early modernist sculpture, Pearson flattens these vertical sculptures by placing them against the wall on pedestals. Through this flattening, he alludes back to a period in which sculpture was emerging from its highly dependent relationship with painting and posit that there might be much left to work within a tight bandwidth of abstraction.

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Anthony Pearson lives and works in Los Angeles. He has had solo exhibitions with David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles (2008) and Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago (2007). He will have his first New York solo-exhibition next fall with Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and is participating in upcoming group exhibitions at Lisa Cooley Fine Art, New York; Galerie Almine Reich, Brussels; and Harris Lieberman Gallery, New York. There is a forthcoming Midway catalog on Pearson's work that will be published later this year.

Regular gallery hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 11am to 5pm