



# PETER HALLEY

23 June–10 September 2017

**“The idea of what can be done with the language (of geometry) interests me. Just as in Picasso, language is a closed set, and yet he can infinitely reassociate things to make them into different kinds of signs. I am trying to do that with a far more limited set of signs...the idea of stylistic change is not important to me because I see my work as research into certain issues rather than as an attempt to create a stylistic statement.”**

**– Peter Halley**

Peter Halley is recognized in the history of contemporary art as a direct heir to American abstractionism. Reconsidering the work of Piet Mondrian, Josef Albers, and Donald Judd, he uses geometric abstraction to develop his own artistic language, establishing a distinctive and recognizable style.

Inspired by the urban environment of New York and the rapid rise of digital technologies since the 1980s, Halley developed a visual vocabulary composed of squares, rectangles, and connecting lines — symbols of the geometrization of modern life. He refers to these forms as “cells,” “prisons,” and “conduits,” bound together by the logic of urban systems.

His works combine rigorous geometry with artificial neon glow, creating a visual tension between the formal austerity of a museum object and the bright palette of materials drawn from mass culture. Halley uses saturated industrial paints — fluorescent DayGlo, metallic, and pearlescent pigments — along with Roll-a-Tex, a paint additive that gives the surface a rough texture. He calls these materials a “hyper-realization” of modernism’s chromatic aspirations, and their brightness a form of “low-budget mysticism,” deliberately contrasting with traditional art conventions.

Halley gained wide recognition in the mid-1980s alongside artists such as Jeff Koons, Haim Steinbach, Meyer Vaisman, and Ashley Bickerton, who formed the core of the Neo-Geo movement. Drawing on conceptual art and postwar aesthetics, they investigated the role of technology and simulation in post-industrial society, rejecting nature as the central source of meaning and consciousness.

Since 1981, Halley has published essays on art and culture, articulating the ideas that underpin his visual practice. His collected writings, *Peter Halley: Collected Essays 1981–1987*, published by Galerie Bruno Bischofberger in 1988, established him as one of the key theorists of contemporary art.

In 1996, Halley and curator Bob Nickas co-founded *Index*, a magazine inspired by Andy Warhol's *Interview*. It became a platform for leading voices in art, music, film, and fashion at the turn of the millennium.

From 2002 to 2011, Halley served as Director of Graduate Studies in Painting and Printmaking at the Yale University School of Art.

Over the course of a long and successful career, Halley's museum exhibitions and public projects have served as bridges between architectural spaces of the past and present. His works have been featured at the São Paulo Biennial, the Venice Biennale, and the Whitney Biennial, and are held in the collections of major institutions including:

- Musée d'Art Contemporain (Bordeaux, France)
- Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid, Spain)
- Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam, Netherlands)
- Des Moines Art Center (Des Moines, IA, USA)
- Dallas Museum of Art (Dallas, TX, USA)
- Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) (New York, NY, USA)
- Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art (Kitakyushu, Japan)
- Museum Folkwang (Essen, Germany)
- Butler Institute of American Art (Youngstown, OH, USA)
- Musée d'Art Moderne de Saint-Étienne (Saint-Étienne, France)
- Museum of Art in Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara, CA, USA)
- Schirn Kunsthalle (Frankfurt, Germany)

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