

Gallery 415  
77 Van Ness Ave, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(new address)

Richard Garett  
Solo exhibition – Time Frame

September 6 – October 27, 2007

### About Time Frame Photographs

Combining Dan Flavin-inspired light art with the tradition of geometric abstraction in painting, Richard Garett's color field photographs hover in a realm between object and pure optical phenomena. Their only subject is shape and color itself, but Garett's process involves an extensive investigation into the nature and capabilities of sight and apprehension, by which we come to know the qualities and contours of our world.

At first look, it would be easy to assume that the photographs in this collection, which are comprised of selections from several series, including the *Cell Series*, *Midfield Series*, *Micro Cell Series*, and *Glowing Field Series*, are concerned entirely with the first two dimensions of space – a flatness and rectilinearity that insists on nothing beyond its borders or beneath its surfaces. These images exude a pure color that cannot result from a photographic imitation of the outside world. Rather they are intent on the tones and hues of the photographic object itself: the high contrast, gloss, reflection, extreme saturation, and plasticene quality achievable by the abstract use of digital manipulation, photographic chemicals, papers, and printing techniques. Equally important is the creative exploitation of digital artifacts and glitches, which become natural elements within the composition.

Garett insists on a particular process and materials (Fujiflex, a latex-saturated printing paper, for example) to achieve this heightened state of the image beyond reality. Each image asserts a form that threatens to overwhelm its borders. The opaque terrains, balanced or conflicting across strict boundaries, approach a kind of incandescence through their saturation and combination. The panels have the quality of an actual source of light, bridging the worlds of reflective and emanative phenomena, in an attempt to achieve a kind of *concrète light*.

It might then come as a surprise to discover that for Garett one of the key subjects of these works is, in fact, time. Through his work in video and sound, Garett has worked extensively with duration and repetition and their effects on perception. These photographs, derived from flash-instants in an endless flow of frenetic video imagery, represent to date the furthest extension of his explorations into the qualities and potentials of time modulation. Garett begins with a stream of abstract video, carefully composed from layers of color and form and put into a constant and non-repeating state of excited motion, moving too fast for any solid form to emerge. From this visually overwhelming flow, he then pulls discreet frames, which become the starting points for the digital manipulations that in turn become the photographs. In this way, the artist attempts to pull from the unrecoverable flow of time a few totemic instants that can serve as markers, or synthetic memento mori. What were optical illusions become concrete facts, solid form, and closed space. We see in this work a movement from time as flow (an endless, unleashed, momentary time) to time as cell (constrained, focused and bonded to its material object). And what we are asked to apprehend in these images is, above all, this invisible frame around time that holds it in its cell, however momentarily. Like the glowing afterimage savored by the mind's eye, Garett strives to hold up these incidental moments of beauty-in-becoming, as a form of not only *concrète light*, but of *concrète memory*.

Andy Graydon  
NYC, August 2007