

Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe

January 7 – February 12, 2011



Some Difference (1986), oil on canvas, 76" x 57"; *More* (2010), oil on linen, 83-1/8" x 109-3/8"

Alexander Gray Associates is pleased to present an exhibition of paintings by Los Angeles-based artist Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe. In his second exhibition with the gallery, the exhibition showcases three works, underscoring the artist's deliberate and disciplined approach to painting.

Anchoring the exhibition is an early painting by Gilbert-Rolfe, *Some Difference* (1986). This abstraction, with a loose composition of geometric forms in muted colors, anticipates a deconstructive architectural language. With its human scale, forms are broken and floated, squares and rectangles fold into each other; light and dark become foils for field and ground. The edges of the canvas echo a visual tension that is built in the central and tertiary spaces on the painting, causing the colors and shapes to simultaneously freeze and move.

Gilbert-Rolfe's newest work, *More* (2010) has emerged after a year of experimentation. In this large-scale work, he embellishes and explodes a grid of squares; building axes and patterns. The surface of the painting combines colors in unexpected ways, contrasting darkness and light, brushstroke and mark, matte and sheen. Horizontal and vertical lines collapse into diagonal streaks, and harlequin forms push through a checkerboard framework. Of the painting, Gilbert-Rolfe writes, "Everywhere you look in *More*, something is happening. There is no ancillary detail, there is only detail. I think that means it's intense without necessarily being dense. Fog can be dense and intense, but a flurry can be the opposite of dense but equally intense. *More* has both of those, plus plenty of others (plenty more)." Regarding his use of color and the structure of the grid, he comments, "...nearly every bit of the grid is different to every other bit. My paintings are held together to a great degree by color-combinations that reflect but don't replicate the color-combinations that are nearby; or by color-combinations that relate to what's around them by distracting from it, either through rearranging what they repeat or through opposition of one or more kind—through complementing, through tone, through being a different kind of movement."

As a long-time educator, Gilbert-Rolfe is a champion of young artists, particularly painters. His engagement with such artists moves beyond the classroom or lecture hall; in 2010 he developed a collaborative studio practice with the Louisville, Kentucky-based painter Rebecca Norton. Their collaboration, under the moniker AwkwardX2, includes the work, *Painting for New York* (2010), included in the exhibition. Gilbert-Rolfe describes their dialogue, "It helps that we are both quite interested in anonymity, which, while not really possible for painters, we can get at least close to by dissolving whatever is distinctive about our individual method in one another's, and by confusing the affine grid through which Rebecca generates her paintings, with the more conventional one that runs through mine."

Gilbert-Rolfe is the author of numerous essays and books, including *Beauty and the Contemporary Sublime* (Allworth Press, 2000) and *Beyond Piety: Critical Essays on the Visual Arts 1986–1993* (Cambridge University Press, 1995). His work is included in prestigious public collections, including the Albright-Knox Gallery of Art, Buffalo, NY; The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami; and the Frederick R. Weisman Foundation in Los Angeles and Minneapolis. The Ulrich Museum at the University of Kansas presented a solo exhibition in 2006, and in 2007, his work was included in the exhibition *Drawing, Stretching and Fainting in Coils*, curated by Diana Thater at the Pinakothek der Moderne for the Festspiel in Munich. His work was also included in the highly-regarded exhibition *Extreme Abstraction* at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery; *100 Artists See God*, curated by John Baldessari and Meg Cranston for Independent Curators International; and in 2004 his work was the subject of a solo exhibition at Frank O. Gehry and Associates, Los Angeles. He has been awarded National Endowment for the Arts fellowships in painting and criticism as well as a Guggenheim fellowship in painting, and was presented the 1998 Frank Jewett Mather Award for Art Criticism by the College Art Association. He is Chair of graduate studies at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California and is a visiting tutor for the Royal College of Art in London.