

47 Orchard Street
New York, NY 10002
(212) 274 0064
info@racheluffnergallery.com
racheluffnergallery.com

For Immediate Release:
Bob Zoell / Wyatt Kahn
April 26–June 2, 2013
Opening Reception: Friday, April 26, 6-8 pm

Rachel Uffner Gallery is pleased to present a two-person exhibition of works by Bob Zoell and Wyatt Kahn. Although they are of different generations, the wall-based work on view by both artists shares an interest in abstraction that pushes past its canonical origins, to encompass various more exploratory effects, from awkwardness, to humor, to the worlds of design and craft.

Bob Zoell's 40-year exploration of language and form emerged from what the artist has characterized as Marcel Duchamp's permission "to be able to laugh at yourself and to find humor in intellectual thought." In his enamel on metal works, chiefly from the 1990s, Zoell's graphic sensibility is utilized, exploring the use of text without an alphabet. Identifying the spatial relationships between letters and words within generic signage and certification forms, Zoell deletes the lines of text and fills that space with color blocks, painted with the exactitude learned from his sign-painting background. Provoking a rereading of Minimalist conventions, the works force viewers to do a double take when they recognize a familiar container filled with resolutely unfamiliar "content." The artist's "No title (Prop Pictures)" series explore the idea of a "picture". This work from the early- to mid-seventies is concerned with the rectangle as a universal "Prop" hanging on the wall, an effect emphasized when the objects are seen out of the corner of one's eye. These works—initially made of painted linen and wood frames when Zoell began the series in 1973, and later fabricated from single pieces of tin, lead or rubber emphasize painting's ability to move both towards and away from the realm of wall-prop.

Wyatt Kahn's jigsaw-puzzle-like paintings are refitted together from the cut-up sections of a larger panel—sections that the artist covers individually in colored canvas, and then encases in another layer of white canvas. Seemingly monochromatic, on second look the paintings reveal a subtle glow emanating from their underlying layer of colored canvas, letting the viewer in on a secret, and rewarding extended engagement. Kahn's works are interested in some of the traditional questions that have preoccupied painting as a medium, such as the role shape plays in pushing against the picture plane. Also significant, however, is the optical multiplicity of several colors sharing one spatial field, which recalls the aesthetics of the photographic double exposure. The uneven crisscrosses upon the artist's canvases, which literally slice them up into segments, is, too, a purposeful enactment of a line reminiscent of drawing. Kahn is less interested in the clean, discrete forms of high modernism than in the underlying sense that "something's wrong with this picture." Or if not wrong, then unresolved, and on the verge of falling apart at the seams—that moment at which the subtle perceptions of everyday life can begin to emerge.

Wyatt Kahn has exhibited his work at Hannah Barry Gallery, London, Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich, and DUVE, Berlin, among other venues. Later this year, he will have a solo show at T293, Rome. He received his MFA from Hunter College, and lives and works in Brooklyn.

Bob Zoell has exhibited his work at galleries and institutions including Ace Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles, Parco Museum, Tokyo, and Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. He has created numerous cover images for the New Yorker, and has completed public artworks in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver and Nashville.

Please call 212-274-0064 or email info@racheluffnergallery.com for more information.

Image: Installation view. Bob Zoell, *No title*, 1998, enamel and clear-coat on metal, 48 x 23 x 2 inches, 121.9 x 58.4 x 5.1 cm.



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