

Adam O'Reilly, 'Davis Rhodes pares down', Interview Magazine, February 2012

Interview



Quietly and concisely, Davis Rhodes tweaks perception using his ephemeral hardedge abstractions. With "Untitled '12," his second solo show at Team Gallery, which opens tonight, the New York-based Rhodes presents nine new foamcore works. These industrially produced materials lean on the wall, lightweight but heavy with presence. Rhodes describes the feeling in the room as "total freedom from hierarchy, alienation or the pressure of identity."

We see hints of Rhodes's hand in the flat paint color fields. Five of the foams boards are warped by the application of water-based paint. Others seem almost raw. "There's nothing pure here. Just artificial surfaces, illusionism," says Rhodes referring to the show not being a minimalist exercise but rather radical transformation of the materials he is working with. The nine panels stand poetically, vaguely referring to their materiality, resisting Rhodes's influence on their surface. "I work with painting to pressurize everything—whether the pieces even stand at all, as pieces, has everything to do with getting a lot from almost nothing, with no stable support to fall back on."

Rhodes' departure point for the show is a large white "1" painted on to foamcore, was shown on the street in Brooklyn in 2008 and inspired the body of work which made up his first show at Team, "Untitled '09," a colorful series of marquees, hand gestures and the "1" cut out of painted vinyl. Three years later, Rhodes work is stripped down, completely void of references. Rhodes says, "It's close to the ground, realist, but very open and mutable."