

PER MÅRTENSSON

November 7, 2014 – January 10, 2015

Vernissage Thursday, November 6th, 2014, 6 - 8 PM

Per Mårtensson's second exhibit with the gallery is centered on architectural abstraction. Inspired by views in the urban settings of his native Malmö, Sweden, he has used images of broken windows and elevator doors as model for paintings mimicking constructivist abstraction on one hand and quite realistic depictions of a stainless steel surface on the other. Both being abstract in appearance they are based on found compositions. As in his previous exhibit, the color palette remains black and white for window fronts reminding us of the series of blinds painted earlier. Devoid of context, the paintings are abstract but the messages penetrate.

The three new series of works - broken windows, elevator doors, face visors - use three different languages of painting and focus on various aspects of surface. The works depict the dichotomy of openness and obstructed view as well as reflection. A storefront window is transparent and allows passers-by to see inside immediately whereas a visor or an elevator door is a barrier that denies clear view, immediate access, blocking the public eye. A new view awaits within the cabin and yet another when you reach your destination. The elevator doors preclude immediate entrance to a corporate or private space, allowing a moment to reflect and make an entrance during the ride. The visor provides one way vision and reflects the hues of the bent polycarbonate film. The transparency of one surface allows communication and visual contact with the interior space whereas the tinted visor and solid stainless steel doors allow one's own reflection to be seen in various degrees of clearness.

The result of cracked glass panes is depicted by the tape used to secure the broken pieces that in turn fragments the views. Tape widths differ depending on the repair company or police intervention. The patterns created are dictated by the break in the window pane. Thus the composition is not based on balance, but is entirely functional, the tape is meant to keep the glass in one piece until replaced. Their presentation as straight acrylic black lines on a white painted synthetic canvas flirt with geometrical abstraction although being based on the results of mark-making by vandals.

The pristine stainless steel elevator door oil paintings are installed low to remind the function they serve in reality. The paintings are diptychs and the two joined panels imitating the doors of an elevator, adding a sculptural element. The neutral surface changes with light and may become a mirror. In abstract terms it may remind of us the night horizon at sea with a warm moon shining on it. Imaginations take over with the lack of reference points. The interior may become the exterior.

Per Mårtensson (1969) is a Swedish artist based in Malmö. In 2012 he completed a 19 x 100 meter outdoor mural commission for Emporia in Malmö. His works are in the collection of the Göteborgs Konstmuseum, Malmö Konstmuseum, Moderna Museet Stockholm, Region Skåne, Stockholms Konst, Colección Jumex, Mexico City, as well as private and corporate collections in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Mexico, Sweden, UK, USA, and Switzerland. In 2014 he received the William Nordings Stipendium at Konstakademien, Stockholm.

