

# ARTFORUM

## Nathan Hylden

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**Nathan Hylden, *Untitled*,  
2008**, acrylic on canvas, 67  
1/2 x 47".

For his first solo show in Germany, the Los Angeles–based artist Nathan Hylden presents works that question the inherent structure of abstract painting through an evocation of Minimalist traditions. Hylden investigates the process of painting itself: The images are created through a range of reproductive and serial production methods that link all of the works here through common motifs. For example, Hylden stacked canvases with gold glazing into overlapping groups and then sprayed the exposed portions with neon-yellow paint, thereby introducing two vertical stripes into each composition. He then used a stencil, which he placed somewhat crookedly on the canvases, and black paint to create a sprayed-on grid structure that produces an irregular, shimmering rhythm that varies slightly in each image. This process makes each image both the starting point and the result of all the others. Although Hylden’s method is evident in the resulting images, it produces appealing painterly effects, and therein rests the irony and severity of his works, as well as the importance and attraction of his approach. Hylden employs seriality to produce unique paintings, and while he disrupts categories such as authorship and expression in specific ways, he succeeds in finding a nonformal, individual language of form. His conceptual approach recalls the work of Wade Guyton and Anselm Reyle, as well as Deleuze’s statement that “modern painting is invaded and besieged by photographs and clichés that are already lodged on the canvas before the painter even begins to work.” Hylden’s art is also a statement: He makes the idea of the singular work of art—something expected from painting above all other art forms—into a theme by employing purely formal means of differentiation.

*Translated from German by Jane Brodie.*