

# ARTslant



## *Once I Get Started*

**Nathan Hylden**

**Art:Concept**

13 rue des Arquebusiers, 75003 Paris, France

20 March 2010 - 30 April 2010

## **Nathan Hylden: New Series**

The opening of Art: Concept's new space will be marked by a solo exhibition by Los Angeles based artist Nathan Hylden. *Once I Get Started* is part of a progression of exhibitions titled *Again And As If To Begin*, *Just Something Else*, *Starting To An End*, *Still Now Again*, and *Done And*. By way of these titles the artist points at aspects of a painting practice based upon auto-reference, an investigation of the terms of a painting's finality, and the personal temporal experience of making and exhibiting work. As the title indicates, Hylden thinks of painting in temporal terms, both as a suspended representation of a process and as continuous projection of visual affect. Although inscribed within a certain time or even when the finality of the work seems to be postponed, the production of individual pieces involves a looping effect comprising reaction and feedback.

Hylden's work is the result of a process that often generates its own logic of production. The painting tools are either exposed or the traces of their use left visible. The artist considers the production as an entity inseparable from the final result, and his artistic practice is as much centered on the exhibition as medium (in the way space is occupied) as on the expanded concept of painting itself.



The exhibition consists of a new series of works made up of alternating layers of metallic washes of paint, white spray paint, and a screen-printed image. When spraying the white paint the works are stacked one on another in a way so that every painting is implicated to the process of making another. Through this process, a discrete work bears the indexical mark, as negative shadow, of another in the series. In each painting the order of operations is different and thus the “ground” of the paintings is unfixed. Rather than working on stretchers and canvases, like in his previous abstract and geometric paintings, Hylden carries on with his exploration of metal supports that now bear the image of the previous canvas format. While Hylden often utilizes mechanically structured or industrial processes, the hand-made gestural qualities so often evoked by painting on canvas are not entirely absent from this new series. They persist by means of the process of representation, or rather by the means where-by the image is produced.

Once I Get Started is an exhibition that deals with the relation of an image to the material form in which it is manifest. As a result of his approach to this, Hylden’s system becomes exponential, expanding yet continuously folding back on itself. Always proceeding from the same photograph of a blank canvas, which has become the matrix of all his aluminium works, the artist has produced several paintings whose surfaces are progressively covered with large areas of paint applied with spray-paint or brushes. From one work to the other, the layout of these geometric and abstract patterns evolves following a cumulative and enfolding logic. In some cases the all-over layers of paint are intrusive yet underline the pre-existing printed image, while in others the printed image appears to follow the painted forms, thus seeming to invert or unsettle the traditional causal effects of painting.



When choosing to represent a blank, unused, canvas, Hylden investigates the depictive and imaginative potential suggested by such an object. As suggested by Gilles Deleuze in *The Logic of Sensation*, the blank canvas is not so much empty, as it is full of every painting ever made, and Hylden’s idea is therefore to merge into this twofold condition that allows him to endlessly re-position himself around this unused, full yet empty, canvas.

Expanding on ideas set forth in his previous exhibitions for *Once I Get Started* Nathan Hylden continues to question the format and conventions of painting enfolded on its own terms.

(Images: **Nathan Hylden**, *Untitled*, 2009 , acrylic on aluminium, 77,5 x 57 in; *Exhibition View*; Private collection, Paris/ Courtesy Art: Concept, Paris)

Posted by [Abhilasha Singh](#) on 12.04.10 | tags: abstract mixed-media

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