

Meliksetian MB Briggs

John Miller
The End of History
April 28th - June 9th, 2018

Opening Reception:
Saturday April 28th 6-8pm



Meliksetian | Briggs is pleased to present *The End of History*, new paintings by New York and Berlin-based John Miller. The works reflect some of the key concerns in Miller's practice including the relationship of the public space (in this case, the televisual space) to exchange value and social relations, and within it the orchestration of public behavior, in particular its relationship to the commodity.

While an integral part of Miller's practice since his early career in the 1980s, painting is the genre Miller has consistently challenged, particularly its inherent associations and its reception. Whether ironically quoting painting styles like regionalist painting or social realism, or using generic imagery from postcards, comic books or reality TV as subject matter - "pictures of pictures" - or making abstract works in a "surrogate" style, intending to evoke a layman's idea of artistry, Miller is acutely aware of the implicit culturally-loaded, regressive nature of painting, hence, his strategies to subvert and destabilize the genre.

The five new paintings in the exhibition are part of the artist's ongoing *Game Show* series begun in 1998. The works in this series are unapologetically machine-made, typified by the removal of the artist's hand, de-skilling, and de-privileging technique: an anti-aurist, materialist critique. They follow a lineage of artists' struggles with the challenge of "painting" by way of devising a machine-driven painting strategy, from Rodchenko through Warhol and beyond. Where the earlier work in the *Game Show* series in the late '90s had a rawness in deliberately off-register printing that pointed to the course-grained imagery of cathode-ray tubes or that were over-painted in a deliberately crude manner, the latest examples are digitally printed, high definition, high resolution, immaculate surfaces on machine-made fabric.

In the new paintings, Miller digitally crops, reorders and reconfigures the space of the game show sets of *The Price is Right*, juxtaposing carnivalesque pattern, hallucinogenic décor, design elements and lighting systems, and numbers, both points earned by the contestants and dollar amounts to be won, with areas of flat but vivid color, in a cacophony of chromatic dissonance, signs, symbols and signifiers. Some works are emptied of human presence, except for a few disembodied hands fetishizing the consumer products available for the participants to win, evoking the commodity space of late-capitalism. Other works depict the surrogate family - the subject and object of TV technology - the jocular host, his attractive assistants and the jubilant contestants, and of course, the unseen, vicarious viewing audience, engrossed in the circulation and accumulation of goods via chance or luck rather than usual work/labor equation; social relations in the televisual space.

Artist, writer and musician John Miller (b. 1954, Cleveland OH) has exhibited extensively since his first solo show at White Columns, New York in 1982. This is the artist's fourth exhibition at the gallery, including two shows with frequent collaborator Richard Hoeck. Major solo exhibitions include a 2016 solo exhibition *I Stand, I Fall* at the Institute of Contemporary Art / ICA Miami curated by Alex Gartenfeld (catalog); a 2011 exhibition at the Museum Ludwig, Cologne in conjunction with his being awarded the prestigious Wolfgang Hahn Prize (cat.); *A Refusal to Accept Limits*, a 2009 mid-career retrospective at the Kunsthalle Zurich curated by Beatrix Ruf (cat.); *Consolation Prize* at the Morris and Helen Belkin Gallery, University of British Columbia, Vancouver (a collaboration with Mike Kelley) (cat.); and *Parallel Economies, Le Magasin*, Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, France (cat.).