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William Tillyer Season *Part Two - The Paintings* 3rd March – 3rd April 2010

Far from seeking to purge his painting of the imitations of nature, Tillyer seems to want to give expression to a new (and modern) vision of it. I believe this is why his art is attaining a new beauty and subtlety at a time when that of so many ...appears to have entered a fatal cul-de-sac.

Peter Fuller, 1987



To the uninitiated contact with William Tillyer's paintings can be de-stabilising. Pitting paint against support, formal allure against a wealth of conceptual allusions, industrial materials against organic flourishes of paint, they are objects that at once lure and retract - demanding the viewer negotiate between their disparate modes and multiple assertions. Tracing the evolution of Tillyer's practice across five decades, March's painting retrospective will reveal the diversity of Tillyer's means and the unity of his concerns, providing unrivalled insight into the career of one of the most thoroughly innovative artists of our times.



The show begins with a look at Tillyer's late 1960s works. Utilising cool, precise, industrial forms, mis-titled pebbles and maze-like abstractions – these pieces teeter between some of the foremost advances of hard-edge abstraction, minimalism and conceptual art and yet refuse to succumb fully to any one such interpretive framework. Rather, they establish an open-ended conflict between such modes, forcing the viewer to interact with their poetic labyrinths of conceptual and perceptual intrigue.

By the late 1970s, inspired by a protracted engagement with printmaking, Tillyer began to make paintings which utilised a steel lattice open to the wall behind to structure representational scenes. With this method he was able to make works which combined the dynamic conceptual and perceptual intrigues of his late '60s works, with an exploration of the physical world. The supporting lattice structure addresses the viewer as at once painterly support, pictorial structure and industrial reality,

suspending the viewer within a free-flux of intersecting assertions played out in the representation of landscape scenes and still-lives.

In the years since Tillyer has constantly re-invented his methodology, making works which explore paints motion across anything from flat canvas to expansive and projecting architectural supports. The pictorial content meanwhile has ranged from the Baroque figuration of his 1983 Victorian Canvases to the harmonious abstractions of his 1990s Kachina works. Throughout, the artist has succeeded in balancing his formal innovations to the multiple demands of subject matter, making works which establish new equivalences between form and content, art and the world, and thus offer rich and considered reflection on art's role in the world – man's existence in the natural sphere.



Spanning close to fifty years of such experiments March's painting retrospective will offer insight into one of the most singular and ambitious painting careers of recent years.

Please join us for the Private View on Tuesday 2nd March, 2010, 6 – 8pm.
For more details or images please contact ben@jacobsongallery.com