

# GALERIE AUREL SCHEIBLER

September 7 — October 20 2001

## Sarah Morris Dulles

Sarah Morris was born in the UK and divides her time between New York and London. Morris is principally a painter but she also makes films, photographs and drawings and has curated a number of exhibitions including the critically acclaimed Hospital.

In the mid 1990s, Morris made text paintings, translating the iconic vocabulary of the media headline into visual statements in a bright pop palette. She recast the emotive power of words such as 'insane', 'guilty' and 'liar' in the same colour and sans serif typeface that she also used for words such as 'Johnny', 'sugar' and 'donuts'. These text paintings evoke urban America filtered through a blank Wahrholian aesthetic. Her later Midtown and Neon series paintings took urban architecture as their starting point, fragmenting the facades of Manhattan skyscrapers or the anonymous hotel architecture of Las Vegas as their starting points. The paintings present graphically reduced details of building facades as structural all-over linear grids. Whilst these paintings resonate formally with the rationalist modernist strategies of Piet Mondrian or Peter Halley, for Morris their formal reduction is the product of a semiotically distilled reference to the urban world. Morris studies semantics at Brown University and her work is informed by an interest in signs and the de-coding of the built environment.

In the Neon series, the grids are dramatically pushed on to the diagonal, marking the images incredibly dynamic with multiple and overlapping vanishing points that seem to convey a sense of speed. The paintings are meticulously executed in gleaming household gloss paint and the reserves areas of the grids read as both the actual glazing of the building as well as compact fields of vibrant unmodulated colour. Each painting repeats particular colour modules and orchestrates their accelerated interaction in various sequences that discharge both glamour and the magnetic pull of the city with its constant circulation and neon lights. These radiant hard-edged paintings with their looming vertiginous planes that seem to be viewed from above, below and even mid-air as if flying by in a helicopter, act like stimulants conveying a filmic sense of urban spectacle.

Morris has also made a series of portraits, abstracted and codified into flat blocks of colour. She has made two films that explore passage through the city. Her mesmeric second film AM/PM was shot on location in Las Vegas.

Sarah Morris has had numerous group and solo exhibitions. In 2000 she has had solo shows at MOMA, Oxford, Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig and the Kunsthalle, Zürich.

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