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Florian and Michael Quistrebert

GALERIE CRÈVECOEUR



View of "Florian and Michael Quistrebert," 2015. From left: *Overlight S2E3*, 2015; *Overlight S2E4*, 2015; *Overlight S2E5*, 2015; *Overlight S2E6*, 2015. From the series "Overlight," 2013–.

In dialogue with a long history of painters' attempts to represent light and harness its dematerializing effects—from Vermeer to Monet to Rothko—the latest works by Florian and Michael Quistrebert sparkle and shine, thanks to the iridescent car paints and tiny, battery-powered lightbulbs used in many of them. In contrast to the brothers' previous muted geometric compositions, their new paintings are characterized by thick gestural strokes and flashy jewel tones. "Hyperdelia," the first exhibition dedicated to the "Overlight" series begun in 2013, introduced this body of work with a didactic before-and-after-style pairing on the gallery's entry wall: *Overlight S2E1* (all works 2015), silver encrusted with sprays of blue, yellow, and pink and inlaid with one green and one blue LED, hung next to *Overlight S2E2*, the only work on view made without paint. Exposing the internal structure of the entire series, this work's thick smears of modeling paste on burlap-covered wood—one might call it not a painting, but an underpainting—also stressed the challenge of dematerializing such patently material supports.

Alternately bouncing light off shiny, uneven surfaces and radiating it from within, the "Overlight" paintings appear paradoxically solid and penetrable. The brightest works, predominantly silver or gold with areas of shimmering turquoise, magenta, and yellow, were presented in natural light on white walls. Despite their undeniable heft and opacity, these paintings created an airy, ecclesiastical ambience under the gallery's large skylights. The encrusted metallic paints call to mind jeweled reliquaries, while embedded LEDs evoke rays of sunlight streaming through stained glass. As a result, the fickle surfaces appear both reflective and translucent. Farther inside the gallery, away from the natural light, more somber works glazed with dark-mauve and coppery-brown car paints hung on exposed-cinder-block walls under fluorescent bulbs. The glinting surfaces of these paintings, which suggest melted John Chamberlain car sculptures, also evoke viscid extraterrestrial landscapes. Moving back and forth in front of their topographical surfaces sent light reflections flitting across the compositions and revealed subtle tonal shifts in the iridescent paint. Like rainbows on an oil-slicked puddle, the paintings' ephemeral colors and luminous effects impart a sense of evanescence that belies their obvious materiality. In the spirit of the Impressionists' atmospheric impasto-laden landscapes, the Quistreberts' abstractions respond to the environment rather than represent it.

The most dramatic presentation was given to *Overlight (Grit 1)*, which was installed alone in a dark room. The surface of the painting, illuminated only by light seeping in through an open doorway, appeared sandy gray from afar and shimmering silver up close. Coated with gritty white traffic paint of the kind typically used to demarcate highway lanes and parking spaces, this work would potentially have been ultra-reflective—but this possibility was denied by its being shown without a direct source of external light. Instead, the shadowy environs played up the painting's internal illumination: two emerald LEDs. Like beady headlights or alien eyes, the bulbs cast green halos out beyond the surface of the painting, hovering in real space. In addition to recalibrating the typical viewer/painting power dynamic by meeting the spectator's gaze with its own probing searchlights *Overlight (Grit 1)* added an aspect of psychological reflection to the series.

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