

Some Notes on the Works of Christopher Brooks

"...everyone secretly prefers an arbitrary and cruel order, which leaves him no choice, to the horrors of a liberal order in which he knows not what he wants, is forced to recognize that he knows not what he wants."

Deleuze & Guattari, Anti-Oedipus

Christopher Brooks will present a series of paintings and photographic work addressing the theme of the 'institution'. Invoking modernist establishments such as the asylum, hospital, clinic, prison and museum, the hard-edged geometry and institutional colors simultaneously invite and reject the human content they propose. The paradox of freedom that desires only absolute control also motivates the symbolic architectures of fascism, tribalism, ritual and religion. In these works Brooks explores the spaces where actual and symbolic architectures begin to define and control the human content they were once intended to serve.

Fears of excreta, death and decay, haunt these abstract spaces. Dark pits, orifices, voids and peep-show like slots are surrounded by emptiness. Into these apparently innocuous spaces we project our fears and fantasies of engulfment, loss of boundary and so on. Their role becomes like that of the swamp in science fiction. For Brooks, it is the fear of becoming bogged down in literal, metaphorical and emotional shit, that motivates the antiseptic virtues of modernist abstraction. The conflict between immortal sterility and dirty entropy that finds its extreme form in science fiction is reproduced in the structure of the paintings.