



REVIEW:

Pard Morrison: New Works

[Marty Walker Gallery](http://www.martywalkergallery.com)

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Pard Morrison: Ghost Call Love

Minimalism, despite its nomenclature, has been teaching us for decades that there is more to simplicity than meets the eye, even if what meets the eye is sometimes barely much of anything at all. By breaking things down to bare essentials, above anything Minimalism begs a physical encounter, asking eyes to actually look at surfaces and sides, and consider what it means for an object to take up space or how so much can resonate in so little, if one lets it. Donald Judd made shiny metal box sculptures, and painter Agnes Martin made subtle grids of graphite on foggy white canvasses, and each, respectively, radically changed a collective consideration of shape and surface, even if Ms. Martin's work was all whispers and hush.

Let's just say that the Minimalist baton has been passed, as it were, to Pard Morrison, whose work was recently on view at Marty Walker Gallery in his first solo show there called Ghost Call Love. Mr. Morrison combines both the structural configurations of Donald Judd and the grid patterns of Agnes Martin in aluminum "canvasses" that depart from the predominate quiet of early Minimalism with a loud, colorful palette.



Morrison's process of welding aluminum sheets into cubes and canvasses and then baking them with layers of color in a process called "patination" gives the surface an earthenware ceramic quality, full of watercolor-like gradations that lend the otherwise flat, slick pieces an element of the handmade, the touched, much like Ms. Martin's paintings. But these are incredibly optical pieces. The imperfect way the aluminum "stretches" to form the canvas on some, and the grid laid atop each box, makes each piece seem to curve off the wall. Others are hard to take in because the popping color is so narrowly gridded that colors blend together, and looking becomes a lesson in color theory and the science of the eye.

Color is not the only way that Mr. Morrison departs from his predecessors. To further perturb the seeming order of his structures, the artist has named each piece not with some cold and sterile title, as is the norm for much Minimalist work, but names that point to deep feeling: *Rebirth of Joy*, *Everything in Our Power*, *The Center of My Heart*, *The Exact Moment I Fell I in Love With You*. Paired with this work, these titles add, or perhaps more appropriately, reiterate, the emotive power of Minimalism. Vulnerability is the core requirement to approaching work like this. The rest shall follow.

by Lucia Simek

pictured above:

Pard Morrison's *Rebirth of Joy*, 2008 patinated aluminum, 96 x 96 x 1 ½ inches