

a new one produced to document the OBORO installation, are on view during the time of the exhibition.

Dave Eppley's installations embody the double meaning of the phrase *Out of Line*, curator Renee Baert's title for her multi-part exhibition on the theme of drawing. His works are indeed made "out of line" by forming an image on a surface, a fundamental definition of drawing. Yet they are also "out of line" in the colloquial meaning of the expression, by pushing the boundaries of what can be considered a drawing. Likewise, the title *Oil Stains* has dual significance for the artist. It not only calls attention to the oil stains that are evidence of OBORO's building's history, it acknowledges that the very vinyl tape he uses is made from oil, a substance that continues to stain our environment.

Rachel Rosenfield Lafo  
Curator, *Oil Stains*

# *Oil Stains*

Dave Eppley

**January 19 – February 16, 2013**

curator: Rachel Rosenfield Lafo, invited by Renee Baert

**I t has been a decade** since Claude Gosselin highlighted the large shifts occurring in the medium of drawing by making it the centerpiece of the 2002 Biennale de Montréal. Certainly since that time, these developments have only proliferated.

*Out of Line* does not announce the "news" of the revitalization of the medium of drawing, now well freed from its former adjunct status to painting, sculpture, animation. Rather, it seeks to foreground aspects of current explorations. This multi-part exhibition was conceived as a project involving several curators, to highlight specific ideas and developments through particular curatorial and artistic voices. A focus emerging from this exhibition overall has been the status of "the line" as a key element of drawing, loosened from its join to canvas or paper.

I approached Vancouver curator Rachel Rosenfield Lafo to contribute to the project, having been impressed by her 2010 exhibition *Redefining Drawing* and learning of previous work she had done in this medium. She graciously agreed—despite the uncertain nature of the independent project. Artist run center OBORO also took a collaborative stance toward *Out of Line*, and the artistic committee selected Lafo's proposal, an in situ installation by Dave Eppley.

**OBORO**

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The artist visited OBORO in 2011 and, during co-director Claudine Hubert's tour of the space, we learned that the gallery had once housed a car showroom! Cars were brought up to the third floor via the large freight elevators. With this knowledge, we could in fact see the trace outlines of marks from oil and tires. Not surprisingly, given the artist's attentiveness to the spatial features of site, this has become the inspiration for the installation. In her curatorial text, Lafo, in turn, succinctly and expertly outlines Eppley's practice, and the *Oil Stains* installation, in terms of its materials, processes, techniques and conceptual foundations while situating his achievements within a broader stream of art and drawing history.

Renee Baert  
Curator, *Out of Line*

**W**orking on-site, Dave Eppley transforms spaces by marking or drawing on floors and walls with coloured vinyl tape. His vibrant abstract compositions respond to the architectural features and idiosyncrasies of each location. He is particularly drawn to overlooked spatial features and often emphasizes corners, stairways, or pre-existing stains and flaws that do not usually receive aesthetic attention. He chooses to work with vinyl tape, typically used to make commercial signs, because it is a readily available, durable substance that can be walked upon and easily removed. By focusing on vinyl with its limited palette of colours Eppley frees himself to concentrate on the concerns that are most important to him, the composition of his drawings and the space they inhabit.

Site-specific drawings fall within the genre of installation art, an expansive category that describes artworks, usually temporary and made on site, created from objects, sound, light, or any other material that alter our experience of space and encourage interactivity. Even though Eppley's vinyl drawings are two-dimensional, they engage with three-dimensional space by suggesting movement and engendering a phenomenological reaction to his lines, colours, and patterns. His work shares these characteristics with the wall drawings of American conceptual artist Sol LeWitt, whose architecturally

scaled drawings could appear as if they were flat, receding into space, or projecting out from the wall. Eppley's tape installations also reference geometric abstract paintings in their hard-edged geometry, colour juxtapositions, and non-objectivity, and the vibrating vertical striped bands of colour have the visual flicker of Op Art.

The artist's working method is to first visit the site of a planned installation in order to understand the space and take note of its anomalies. After learning about the building's functions and history, he executes studies and drawings that are used in the realization of the final project. For the OBORO exhibition he prepared some of the vinyl shapes in his studio, but the rest were produced on-site and evolved during the installation process. He chose to focus his attention on the oil stains evident on the gallery floor because they exist as reminders of the building's original use as a driving school and automobile showroom.

To highlight the oil stains Eppley outlined them with an organic "necklace" of white pentagons surrounded by coloured lines. The pentagonal shapes resemble cellular structures that could continue ad infinitum. In another area of the gallery Eppley has created a string displacement piece, following the example of American artist Fred Sandback, whose minimal sculptures made from lines of coloured acrylic yarn defined the edges of virtual shapes without actually representing them. Eppley stretches a taut string across his wall drawing of vertical stripes, accentuating the pattern at the point of displacement so that the stripes shift slightly, appearing, with hypnotic optical effect, as if they are bulging out from the wall.

Another key component of Eppley's installations is their time-based nature. Although the pentagonal shapes of the OBORO piece were made in his studio in advance, the works take their final form in the gallery, where the artist can respond to ideas and situations that occur as he works. There is also a performative and communal aspect to the work, since the artist works with assistants to complete his labour-intensive projects and often installs in public spaces where members of the public may watch. To document his working process Eppley has produced a number of stop-motion videos showing the progression of the installations as they take shape. Several of these, including