

CRITICS' PICKS

Los Angeles

Chris Martin

DANIEL WEINBERG GALLERY
6150 Wilshire Blvd. #8
May 1-May 29

In *Sweet Dreams (2nd Pillow Painting)*, 2008–2009, Chris Martin has puffed out the picture plane, creating a grid of six rectangular pillows crammed together in two rows and fastened to a burlap and canvas ground. Half are spray-painted tranquil white or blue while the other three flash highlighter hues of yellow and pink, signaling a transition into the buzz of a dream state. Minimalism's grid inflates into a squishy pop romance, and Martin's combine seems to sing that Morrissey line: "Send me the pillow, the one that you dream on." Most of this show hinges on an enthusiast's private relationship (his, mine) to music, reaffirming the affinity between Martin and Mary Heilmann, who shares his sense of playful, loose, unstable, and lively abstraction tuned to a rock wavelength. One painting of a seven-pointed star in a bright Africanized palette of red, yellow, and green is dedicated to the deceased soul singer Isaac Hayes. Complementing the aforementioned pillows is a pair of maroon leather Brooks Brothers slippers stitched with Bob Dylan's youthful image fittingly snipped from the cover photo of *Bringing It All Back Home*—domestic accessories for listening to a homecoming record. And, though chromatically sedate in pale beige, *The Last Optical Illusion of 2009*, 2006–2009, may have the strongest presence: Two rings of slash marks orbit a central black dot, while a caption along the bottom directs CYCLOPS: STARE AT THE BLACK DOT WHILE MOVING BACK AND FORTH; the rings begin to rotate around each other as the viewer steps to and fro. Closer inspection reveals two vinyl records collaged onto the surface, suggesting that the painting's concentric configuration and its illusory movement simulate the afterimage of a record player's hypnotic spinning. At its best, Martin's work makes you dance and puts you in a momentary trance, like a catchy hit single.



Chris Martin, *Sweet Dreams (2nd Pillow Painting)*, 2008-2009, oil, spray paint, collage on burlap and canvas, 52 x 43 x 10".

-Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer