

contemporary

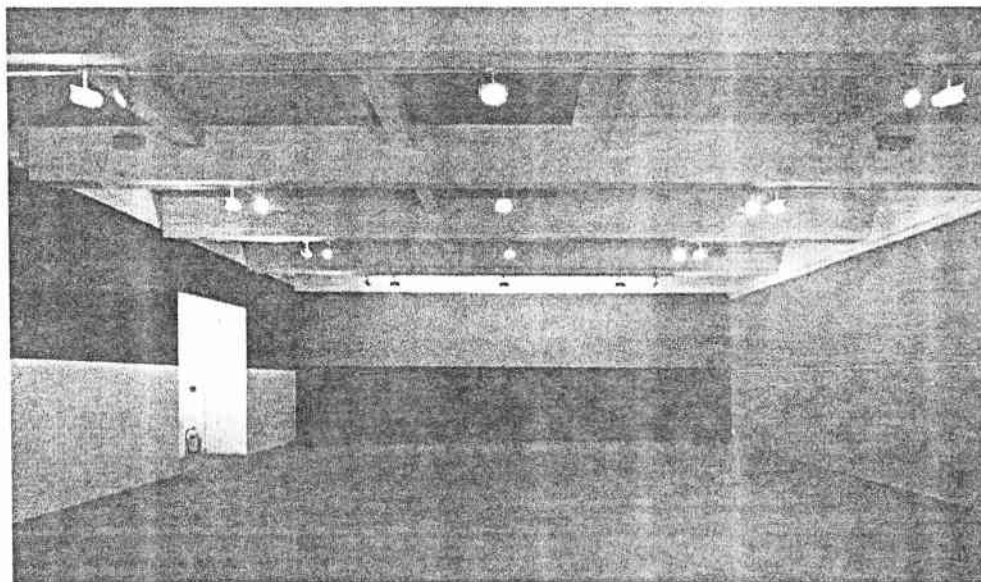
REVIEWS

LONDON: CHISENHOLE GALLERY
 LOTHAR GÖTZ:
 FOREVER YOUNG
 26 June – 4 August 2002
www.chisenhole.org.uk

Small children had a good time at the Chisenhole this summer. Lothar Götz executed one of his distinctively dramatic all-over paint jobs, and when I visited, the proper response was clearly to run around and holler. Kids certainly have fresher eyes for colour than their parents, and the title the Berlin artist gave to his show did suggest a re-education, a re-sensitising of our tired retinas; but of course, if you put bright colour in front of the gallery-going public, they formalise and analyse with disinterest like good modernists.

Götz approached the space in a broadly simple fashion. Each of the four walls was divided in two and painted with rollers in different hues of a dense saturation. The left wall bore cobalt teal over pyrrole red; the facing wall had magenta over light green; the right-hand wall had violet over-pyrrole orange; and the near wall placed cerulean blue over cadmium yellow. The ceiling got a similar treatment, with three bands of colour covering two-thirds of the space.

It was an installation that delivered every



LOTHAR GÖTZ, *Forever Young*, 2002, acrylic paint applied to gallery wall, installation view at Chisenhole Gallery.
 Photo: Michael Franke. Courtesy: Chisenhole Gallery, London

one of the sensual pleasures of looking at colour-based abstraction. Some walls seemed to bow under the pressure of their neighbour; others shone forth in defiance of the eye's natural search for depth; and when the powerful lights didn't flare off the walls and reduce them to grainy surfaces, many had an insistent hardness and flatness somehow even more concrete and defiant than their material substance. However, it also seemed merely epicurean in interest:

Götz has shifted formalism into what has the appearance of a confrontation with the institution – but he hasn't abolished it. His is a curiously tautological attitude to form and meaning similar to Bridget Riley's: both use the language of transcendence but put an obstacle in the way. Riley does it by using the quotidian language of fashion and design, Götz by leaving the canvas aside. Both give pleasure, but to what end?

MORGAN FALCONER