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AROUND THE GALLERIES

Monochrome: the color of funny

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Art Critic

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"Witty" is not a word frequently applied to monochrome paintings. Their nearly 100-year legacy in abstract art is more often associated with such sober notions as purity, clarity and spiritual aspiration. Yet it fits to a proverbial T an elaborate and compelling new work by **Morgan Fisher**.

At China Art Objects, "Alien Pendant Pair Paintings" is a group of six single-color canvases, each 4 feet square, installed as one work. Building on organizational systems familiar from Minimal and Conceptual art, Fisher has constructed the installation according to a simple structure derived from the color wheel. Then he's given the wheel a couple of unexpected yet savvy spins.

The flatly covered surface of each painting is red, orange, yellow, green, blue or violet. Rather than pure colors, however, Fisher has used fluorescent paints -- not unlike those employed for very different purposes in the late 1960s and early 1970s by the formalist abstract painter Frank Stella.

These ultraviolet-sensitive pigments seem to give off an inner light -- though the effect is purely scientific rather than that of a metaphysical glow. They are also kind of cheesy, more attuned to associations with