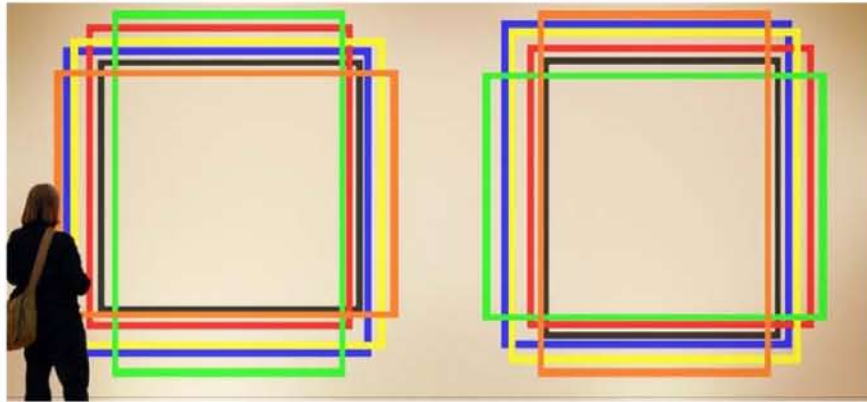


LG Williams: 'Anything But'

The conceptual artist goes beyond art at The Container



By Emily Wakeling

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The second exhibition at The Container, Nakameguro's newest and most unusual gallery, is a welcome addition to the calendar of early summer Tokyo shows. LG Williams must select his Tokyo galleries based on their efficient use of space: The Container is, quite literally, a shipping container with art inside, while his other representative gallery, [TANA](#), is actually just a bookshelf. Only in Tokyo, a city full of '1K' apartments, would you find such wonderful concepts for tiny galleries. This artist's ease with conceptualism shows that size doesn't always matter when it comes to showing interesting contemporary art.

Williams wraps himself and his artwork in mystery and parody. Officially known by the name LG Williams/The Estate of LG Williams, he is a prolific media creator (see his [YouTube channel](#) and [press releases](#)). His most well-known projects are also the most conceptually succinct. For this year's Venice Biennale, he is hawking the American Pavilion: a simple sign, 'For Sale by the Artist', was erected outside the building, with proceeds going to ease US debt. At a Kyoto gallery, he made art museum-style wall labels for artworks that did not (yet?) physically exist. More recently, at this year's Art Cologne, he contributed a large banner proclaiming 'Angelina Jolie was Here!' Going one step further than his non-existent art, this was art about the celebrity hype surrounding art.

'Anything But' is a colourful show that resembles in form the works of classic minimalist painters, or perhaps even Op-art. The walls are adorned with rectangles, arranged at about the same viewing height as the standard wall-hanging of a painting in an art museum. On a purely visual level, they are rather dynamic graphics, with sharp lines and constantly criss-crossing colours, but the works get more conceptual when considering the artist's choice of medium: painter's tape. The rectangles, while visually appealing on their own, are made of a material used in the production stages of painting. This is art about the preparation for art. Unlike his other recent shows, Williams's tape paintings demonstrate aesthetic pleasures even in the apparent absence of art itself.