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Jenny Holzer Returns to Painting (Not a Joke) With A Colorful, Political, and Beckett-Inspired Message

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So, Jenny Holzer paints? The world famous artist is known for her illuminating, political, text-based light sculptures and projections, that have lit the galleries of institutions like the Whitney, MoCA Chicago, MoMA, and represented the United States at the Venice Biennale in 1990. Apart from her signage, she has inscribed chosen texts in park benches, plaques, sarcophagi, and even incorporated human bones in her 2009 solo exhibition at the Whitney, "PROTECT PROTECT."

This recent work is a complete departure with regards to medium (the new works are oil on linen), but her obsession with text holds fast. The paintings are government documents she has chosen to alter in striking modernist fashion; creating color gradients atop originally censored text we may never have access to – nor does Holzer herself. In a nod to the Suprematist work of Russian Abstractionist Kazimir Malevich, her color choices are bold and blocky – with the exception of the black and white pieces; aesthetically enjoyable, enlarged versions of the documents themselves. Holzer's new work plays with both continued Constructivist attitude, and the notion of Samuel Beckett's play, "Endgame." While she drives home the "endgame" of the public's access to classified information, it doesn't look like there is stalemate in Holzer's expanding creativity.