

18 March - 22 April 2023

Praz-Delavallade is pleased to present *Thought Forms*, an exhibition of new paintings by Chris Hood. This is the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery.

Chris Hood's most recent body of work features pop culture iconography both familiar and banal. Fragmented surrealist clichés of melting clocks and burning candles commingle with cartoonish, disembodied hands and faces. These playful elements drift aimlessly across a vivid, shifting color field, often serially repeating across the composition like a fading echo. Their dynamic background is the bleeding through of paint applied to the reverse side of the canvas, a distinct approach central to the artist's practice in which the canvas consequently functions as a veil—a thin partition between the conscious and subconscious, the mundane and the uncanny, the immediate and the profound.

The title *Thought Forms* alludes to an influential 1905 book by the same name, in which theosophist Annie Besant describes the visual manifestation of thought itself: "*Each definite thought produces a double effect—a radiating vibration and a floating form.*" Both elements are present in Hood's work on opposite sides of the canvas, yet the artist is less concerned with meta-physical than the physical properties of painting itself.

Hood's application of resin-based paint from behind yields results akin to the soak-stain paintings of the 20th-century; his compositions feature extremely thin layers of pigment that saturate the weft of the canvas. In contrast to other stain painters, thanks to the resistant properties of resin, Hood's colors do not blend, but rather bloom autonomously alongside and within one another. His approach is a blind, intuitive process, an exquisite corpse in which each brushstroke is hidden by up to a dozen successive layers of paint; these subsequently compressed when viewed from the other side into a single, psychedelic plane. The two thought-form elements of Hood's paintings—the radiating vibrations and floating forms—together form a psychic and spatial collision, evoking opposing sensations of accumulation and compression, literal and subjective, the image and the imagined.

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« *The painter who forms a conception of his future picture builds it up out of the matter of his mental body, and then projects it into space in front of him, keeps it before his mind's eye, and copies it.* »  
— Annie Besant in *Thought Forms*