

Peres Projects

## Mike Bouchet – Power Lunch

September 17 – November 1, 2014

Opening: September 17, 2014 18 – 22h

Mike Bouchet's large-scale oil paintings demonstrate how our cultural climate is ruled by the bewitching mixed signal known as the Double Bind. In the nineteen-fifties, English anthropologist Gregory Bateson coined this phrase to describe how conflicting messages can render over-stimulated individuals vulnerable to coercion. For Bouchet, popular entertainment and global consumer brands are powerful perpetrators of such clashing, mind-controlling communications. His glossy photo-realist paintings isolate a particularly influential branch from our ubiquitous pop-culture cacophony — the movie poster — to illustrate the tensions, escape fantasies, conflicts, erotic stimulation and power of this popular form of mass-media imagery. The influence of the behavioral sciences in the development of these posters is evident, but their genesis lies in the history of painting. Bouchet's orderly canvases are composed from images of actual movie-posters to form jarring juxtapositions. The source material, with its heavy psychological baggage, is transformed through painting back into a new image, keeping psychological weight, but with its original agenda obscured. Bouchet's painting technique is also rife with rich conflicts. He outsources production to professional painting firms in the Far East, forcing a conceptual tie between unique canvases and global mass-marketed consumer "fast" culture. On the most visceral level, this is the "double bind: that viewers experience when encountering Bouchet's works. Evoking the distance between drivers and the billboards they pass, his canvases appear from afar to be examples of photorealism. Yet the colours and forms dissolve into near abstraction and a mishmash of brushwork techniques when viewers approach more closely. Paradoxically and jarringly, the nearer viewers get while examining Bouchet's paintings, the more confusing and compelling they become, a metaphor which can be applied just as effectively to the original source material, as well as to the cultural realities which they embody.

Peres Projects' opening hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 11am – 6pm. For further information and sales inquiries, please contact Javier Peres ([javier@peresprojects.com](mailto:javier@peresprojects.com)), Nick Koenigsknecht ([nick@peresprojects.com](mailto:nick@peresprojects.com)) or by telephone +49 30 275 950770.

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