

JACK PIERSON  
*Paintings*

Maccarone  
630 Greenwich Street  
January 31 – March 7, 2015  
Opening Reception February 10

Maccarone is pleased to announce an exhibition with Jack Pierson at 630 Greenwich Street from January 31 through March 7, 2015. The selection of large-scale paintings, some of which have never before been exhibited, were made between 1997 and 2002 and capture both icons of Gen X cool (see: Courtney Love's lips) and the natural world, as observed during Pierson's travels to and from southern California.

Though they are selected from several series – including "Hang On To Your Ego," and others – the works are united by an interest in the history of abstraction and the fraught meanings implicit therein. In the creation of these works, Pierson used what was then a cutting-edge, billboard-painting technology to transfer his own photographic images to canvas using acrylic lacquer. The resulting images are photographs-as-paintings, hovering in an indeterminate space where paint is visible on a canvas surface, but was intentionally placed there through an impersonal, icy, and industrial process.

To understand the milieu out of which Pierson's paintings emerged, one can compare the works to those of his contemporary Jeff Koons who, eight years earlier, also transferred photographic images onto canvas. Though taken from photographs, Koons's soft-core *Made in Heaven* pieces are conceived of as oil paintings and therefore explicitly placed within a hetero paradigm of painting – as opposed to a homo paradigm of photo. While Pierson acknowledged the reality of such a dichotomy, his project determined to question and confuse such boundaries.

Imagining his erotic portraits of onetime It Boy Ed O'Toole as the elements of his own metaphorical Rothko chapel, Pierson elevates giant, abstracted images of the masturbating, ecstatic male body to the sanctified heights of mainstream hetero-abstraction. At once, the work integrates the sacred and profane; photography and painting; dominant culture and subculture.

Pierson once stated that "photography is nostalgia" and all of the works on view tap into this interest in memory and loss. Whether close-ups of skin, snippets of wildlife, or reflective aquatic surfaces, the paintings memorialize a certain melancholic moodiness. Pierson is a master of using ordinary scenes to stir up loneliness and desire.

This exhibition is presented in collaboration with Cheim & Read. For more information, please contact [press@maccarone.net](mailto:press@maccarone.net).