

Petzel

For Immediate Release

FINE YOUNG CANNIBALS

June 24 – August 5, 2016

Opening reception: Friday, June 24th, 6-8pm

456 West 18th Street

Petzel Gallery is pleased to announce *Fine Young Cannibals*, a summer group exhibition, running parallel to Wade Guyton and Stephen Prina's annual collaboration. The show opens Friday, June 24th and will remain on view until Friday, August 5th.

Discourse on contemporary painting has recently taken a turn toward technological properties, neoliberal politics, and 'market flipping'. The term "Zombie Formalism" was coined as a comment on "process fetish" and the state of a perceived art market deemed cynical in nature. However, could this be a misconception? Are painters indeed trying to impress an audience with their market savvy and skill in manipulating media? Achim Hochdörfer, director of the Brandhorst Museum, Munich, writes in his essay, "How the World Came in":

The essence of painting is no longer defined by the manual application of paint onto canvas or some other support; rather it manifests itself in the fact that paintings are no longer understood as self-contained, hermetically sealed objects but are instead hubs of much larger referential networks. (2016)

Robert Rauschenberg's work might be the matrix for Hochdörfer's assessment; his influence is certainly ubiquitous in contemporary art. Nonetheless, consideration can also be placed on the self-referential nature of paintings—whether or not they attempt to articulate their own *constructedness* as motif and motivation. Art historian David Joselit, co-curator of *Painting 2.0*, writes in an essay on Jacqueline Humphries that her affective gesture is a "picture", a representation of itself. *Fine Young Cannibals* comprises a group of artists who further this discussion: Christopher Wool's painting (2007) derives from various technical maneuvers to re-stage (or blow-up) an earlier drawing; Rudolf Stingel's do-it-yourself painting (2015) demystifies the creative act altogether, while Martin Kippenberger's rubber paintings include cast protrusions of earlier painting motives (a revamping in 3D from 1991). Wade Guyton's inkjet printer is no more a sophisticated tool than Laura Owens' silkscreen, but it allows him to cannibalize images from earlier installations and re-charge (or empty out) their now legendary status. Laura Owens intersects newspaper clippings with heavy brush marks, too disproportionally large to be mistaken for subjective expressivity; Pieter Schoolwerth's elaborate process of making paintings incorporates studio photography, digital printing on canvas (with heavy distortions) and oil paint, almost like a 'corrective' gesture—the artist's hand; Albert Oehlen's computer pictures follow a similar logic—hybrids all in print and paint.

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It would be as problematic to reduce these artists to mere agents in some conspiracy, as it would be ridiculous to blame de Kooning for generic abstract paintings in the 1950s and 1960s. Furthermore, abstraction in Cheyney Thompson's work is not a genre in or for itself; his paintings address divisions of labor, time and the body as much as the fundamentally opposite, Heimo Zobernig, identifies the inherent theatricality of making paintings. Jorge Pardo takes his self-referential play to another extreme by attaching an iPad onto the surface that connects the viewer with his studio in Merida, Mexico.

As divergent as these artists are (rarely exhibiting together), they engage the artifice of their paintings—all mechanisms, tools and attributes are laid bare in order to open up a relevant discourse on painting, abstract or representational, analog or digitally processed: what constitutes a painting today and how vital is that 'painting-body'?

Petzel Gallery is located at 456 West 18th Street. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM. **For press inquiries, please contact Andrew Black at andrew@petzel.com, or call (212) 680-9467.** For general inquiries, please email info@petzel.com.

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

Walead Beshty
Wade Guyton
Jacqueline Humphries
Martin Kippenberger
Michael Krebber
Albert Oehlen
Laura Owens
Jorge Pardo
Seth Price
Pieter Schoolwerth
Josh Smith
Rudolf Stingel
Cheyney Thompson
Kelley Walker
Christopher Wool
Heimo Zobernig