INPUT / OUTPUT: PAINTING AFTER TECHNOLOGY

Glenn Brown, Jeff Elrod, Julian Schnabel, Ida Tursic & Wilfried Mille, Michael Williams, Christopher Wool, and Toby Ziegler

London: 41 Dover Street, 16 April – 25 May 2019

Michael Williams, Technology After Painting, 2019

Galerie Max Hetzler is pleased to announce *Input / Output: Painting After Technology*, a group show bringing together artists currently using digital technology in their artistic process. The exhibition features works by **Glenn Brown**, **Jeff Elrod**, **Julian Schnabel**, **Ida Tursic & Wilfried Mille**, **Michael Williams**, **Christopher Wool**, and **Toby Ziegler**.

Calling into question the very nature and process of painting, the works included challenge our traditional understanding of the medium and its tools, raising questions about authorship, hierarchies and democratisation. Probing the material qualities of painting, the artists often blur the boundaries between what is printed and painted, machine produced and handmade, invented and found, analogue and digital, sometimes all within the same work.

For the contemporary artist, there has never been so wide a choice in physical and digital production tools, coupled with a saturation of available images in the public domain. In an era where pictures are mass-circulated on screens and devices and rapidly consumed, an important question arises: what is our experience of viewing painting in the flesh? *Input / Output: Painting After Technology* demonstrates how each of the artists included respond to the opportunities and challenges present in the digital era.

Jeff Elrod explores the relationship between 'analogue' tools, including acrylic, tape and spray-paint, and the techniques afforded by computer software. For the viewer, the analogue and digital aspects are not easy to delineate: sometimes seemingly computerised illustrations are actually a reinterpretation of earlier hand drawings. Painting, spraying and inkjet printing his designs onto canvas, the effects created or reworked on screen are brought into the physical world. Elrod's works capture a moment when analogue and digital production merge, connecting the profound history of painting and abstraction with the digital age. The artist's hand is both present and distanced in *Vitamin Z*, 2018, where the combination of smooth colour fields is accompanied by spray painted additions, and the clear journey of both the artist's brush and mouse. In *South West landscape and cobalt green light*, 2018, artist duo **Tursic & Mille** combine silkscreen printing with oil paint to layer up fast and slow techniques in mark-making. This brings together not only the work of two artists' hands and minds, but also two types of image production: the flat, smooth printed shapes, and the slower, shiny oil paint overlay. The duo have a sustained interest in how a painting can be made; engaging with the canvas at staggered intervals from one another, they develop a particular rhythm in their practice. Coupled with the addition of working both on screen and on the canvas directly, further distance is created.

Glenn Brown takes reproductions of artworks spanning centuries as his initial source material. Using computer software as a means to experiment with his composition, by testing, erasing and overlaying potential stylistic additions in each image, Brown's hand-drawn lines in the final work do not make his process immediately evident to the viewer. On-screen he adds to, manipulates and rescales this appropriated imagery before constructing the final drawing by hand, evolving lines into new ideas and pathways. Each resultant work maintains an unparalleled

uncanniness to the source material, yet often every brushstroke has undergone reassessment and development. For **Julian Schnabel**, each work in the 'Purple Paintings' series begins with the application of a photograph to a polyester support through the process of inkjet printing. This under-drawing is then spray-painted, the abstract marks of which sink into the fabric and appear on the reverse due to the consistency of the media. In *Ascension, I*, 2015, the photograph depicts a studio floor, shot from a distorted perspective, bringing out the depth of the markings embedded into the worn floor.

Toby Ziegler sources initial content for his paintings from found images, often art historical, which he digitally manipulates usually by inverting or desaturating. The re-interpreted images are then painted onto aluminium panels with small brushstrokes that at times seem to resemble pixels. Where the painting process takes a long time, a sanding-machine further disrupts the surface of the work, immediately affecting the image in a manner similar to instantaneous digital edits. The resultant layers of painting and reflective sanding marks echo how computers process images, losing and gaining information and data through translation of the image. *Two green pears separating the hour from the minutes*, 2019, is over-painted with a 'grid' form, which can be seen to reference the use of such structures in the history of painting, paired with the search engine grid just visible in the base layer of paint, another instance wherein Ziegler abstracts the oddly familiar. In his practice **Michael Williams** utilises the layering processes that computer software facilitates. His work testifies that with a computer it is possible to overstep the physics of traditional painting: removing or adding layers and digital brushstrokes beyond their visible chronology. As one of Williams' more allegorical and narrative paintings, *Technology After Painting*, 2019, shows motifs from a junior sports match emerging from a complex foreground. Clearly apparent is the edge of the printed section, which acts as a white frame overlaid with oil paint in sections, a gesture which can be seen to create a screen, and sense of distance, within the painting.

For **Christopher Wool**, using a multitude of different production processes has been a way to continually reinvent his work and approach to painting. Included in the exhibition is a portfolio of photogravures made through an intaglio polymer process, and a silk-screen print on paper. Bringing older technologies sharply into contemporary experimentation, both of these provide insight into how Wool combines more traditional artistic technologies, such as analogue forms of printing, with often digitally manipulated content. Wool's careful interest in both layering and erasure, for which the development of Photoshop provides new means, can be seen as another platform from which the artist continually tests new grounds in painting.

Further exhibitions and fair participations:

Navid Nuur
When doubt turns into destiny
6 April – 11 May 2019
57, rue du Temple 75004 Paris

Adam Pendleton
Who we are
25 April – 29 June 2019
Opening: 25 April, 6-8 pm
Bleibtreustraße 45; Goethestraße 2/3, 10623 Berlin

TEFAF New York
3 – 7 May 2019

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