

Toby Ziegler

Unused Potential

November 27, 2014 – January 24, 2015

Opening: November 27, 6-8pm



Parachute Failure, 2014,
oil on aluminium, 150 × 184 cm

Galerie Max Hetzler, Paris, is delighted to announce *Unused Potential*, the first personal exhibition of British artist **Toby Ziegler** (b. 1972) in France and his third solo show with Galerie Max Hetzler.

As a painter and sculptor, Toby Ziegler was always interested in the relation between an object, its image and the space (real or pictorial) in which it exists.

The circulation of images, and in particular reproductions of artworks, as well as the loss of information that can occur during their successive transmissions and transformations, is a subject at the heart of the exhibition: how an image can step by step lose definition and eventually detach from its original subject to become something else, a new *visual space* in-between a clear figuration and a raw abstraction.

Two source images were used for the seven paintings presented in the exhibition; they are reproductions from landscapes by British painter Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788), and by French painter Claude Gellée dit «le Lorrain» (1600-1682). These landscapes are sort of “generic pictorial spaces”, they are the perfect motifs to work on the image’s disappearance, Ziegler explains. The reproductions have been indeed altered by computer programs until they have become an ambiguous pictorial space, which catches the artist’s attention.

Toby Ziegler then carefully reproduces this stage of alteration with oil paint on aluminium. A last more radical step consists in degrading the painting, using a sanding-machine. The artist gently erases some parts of the paint layers he had applied. This last intervention literally reflects the loss of information of the dematerialized images; it is also his way of creating a new singular and subtle image in-between abstraction and figuration.

The paintings in the exhibition appear like variations on the same theme. In each of them, the sanding-sabotage step creates an ambiguous relation between the image and the support: the shiny metal background protrudes and imposes its flatness.

Looking at these unusual paintings could also lead to an exercise of “archaeology of an image”. But this quest seems to be sabotaged again by the deceptive and ambivalent titles of the paintings: *Burning Bridges*, *Parachute Failure*, *Momentarily Proud*, *Pissing Upstream*, *Unused Potential*, *Imaginary Basement*, *Mercy Fuck*.

An exhibition catalogue will be published by Holzwarth Publications, Berlin.

Toby Ziegler was born 1972 in London, where he lives and works. He has participated in several solo and group exhibitions including *Expanded Narcissistic Envelope*, The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield UK (2014); *Borderline Something*, Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin (2013); *The Cripples*, off-site exhibition at a car park (Q-park 3-9, Old Burlington Street), London (2012); *The Alienation of Objects*, Project 176, Zabludowicz Collection, London, travelled to New Art Gallery, Walsall, UK (2011), Zabludowicz Collection, Sarisalvo, Finland (2012) and Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki (2012); *Gold*, Galerie Belvedere, Vienna (2012); *The Future Demands Your Participation: Contemporary Art from the British Council Collection*, Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai (2010); *Newspeak: British Art Now*, The State Ermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, Russia and The Saatchi Gallery, London (2009-2010); *Recent Abstraction, British Art Display 1500-2007*, Tate Britain, London (2007); *Archipeinture: artists build architecture*, Le Plateau, Paris (2006); *The Future Lasts a Long Time*, Le Consortium, Dijon (2005). His work is featured in major private and public collections including The Arts Council (London); the British Council (UK); Tate Britain (London); Saatchi Gallery (London); Hudson Valley Centre for Contemporary Art (Peekskill, USA); Goss-Michael Foundation (Dallas); Kadist Art Foundation (Paris) and Museum of Old and New Art, Tasmania (Australia).