

PRESS RELEASE

Toby Ziegler

The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse

February 23 – March 29, 2008

Patrick Painter Inc. is pleased to present the first U.S. exhibition of British artist Toby Ziegler. For his solo show in the West Gallery, the artist defiantly redefines the terms of painting and sculpture, causing them to collide somewhere between technology and art history. Ziegler challenges the viewer with a visual language that is both futuristic and familiar. Entitled, *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse*, the exhibition addresses a condition of questioning existing relationships. The very notion of spiritual abuse alludes to relationships of power, control, dissent and disbelief. Ziegler's works fluctuate between the technological and ideological, referencing the tensions between the old and the new.



For the exhibition Ziegler, has presented several paintings that are part abstraction and part landscape. The images shift from patterns to recognizable horizons, sunsets and clouds. Colorful forms built from intricate geometries come together. Historical references, such as a section of sky from a Constable cloud study, are interrupted by lightening-like bolts and hand-painted complexities. He confronts graphic hard edge painting with the softness of glowing horizons and endless skies. Inherently painterly, these works are built up of visible brushstrokes that obliterate the notion that these works are computer generated.

The hand is very visible in the artist's practice. Several works on paper are layered upon one another, similar to the technique of collage. Parts of the paper are then torn away to expose images from underneath. Assembled as such, these works alternately reveal and conceal what the artist would like the viewer to see.

Ziegler has created several sculptures that transform geometric patterns into objects. These objects, made of cardboard, are painted white, creating creatures that are both indistinguishable and recognizable. *True North*, a work that references Courbet's *Origin du Monde*, is a sculpture in the shape of an ass, suspended from the ceiling. These forms relate to the body, reminding the viewer of a relic or fragment of a classical Greek sculpture. *The Liberals*, modeled on the Staffordshire pottery dogs are beautifully out of proportion while his *Pathetic Fallacy (Second Version)* is a small-scale mammoth, a tragic creature that exists only in our imagination. The title, *Pathetic Fallacy* describes the literary term of assigning human qualities to an inanimate object.

The viewer's projections onto Ziegler's works are part of the play between meaning and ideation. Many of the works draw inspiration from clouds, and the romantic practice of designating recognizable forms to the ephemeral floating shapes that float across the sky. Similar to the way in which we assign human like qualities to objects, longing for meaning, we make a futile attempt to define what often eludes definition.

The exhibition will open Saturday, February 23, 2008 from 6-8 pm and will remain on view through March 28. Please contact the gallery for further information.

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