

DIAZ CONTEMPORARY

MEDIA RELEASE

Robert Linsley

Islands 1998-2005

April 12 – May 12, 2007

Diaz Contemporary is pleased to present Robert Linsley's first solo exhibition with the gallery, a survey of his work from 1998-2005.

All of the canvases in Linsley's show are 72x60 inches, a scale derived from the artist's own body. Linsley's works are created by spilling commercial enamel on canvas and then tipping the surface in various directions to make the island shapes.

By determining the motion and consistency of the paint, Linsley controls the form of the islands and the jaggedness of their outlines. While his technique gives him control over all aspects of the image—number of colours and shapes, composition, quality of the surface—the final result is unpredictable and emerges from the working process itself. In this way, the work presents a new kind of balance between freedom and control.

Some of Linsley's islands are made with a single pour, others are composite. The individual pour is analogous to a single brush stroke. The forms appear to be released from gravity so that they can rise and turn in any spatial direction, breaking away from the two-dimensional surface of the canvas.

Linsley's titles are carefully thought-out and contain more than one level of meaning. As the artist reveals: "The works set up a chain of meanings: a shape stands for an island, an island can stand for something else, such as a figure or a symbolic place, and then the title opens up even more possible references."

Robert Linsley holds an M.F.A. from the University of British Columbia and a Postgraduate Diploma in Studio from Simon Fraser University. He has exhibited across Canada and Europe and has published articles on painting including the recent "The Surface of Space" (Canadian Art, Winter 2006). Linsley's works are included in prominent public and corporate collections including: Vancouver Art Gallery; Edmonton Art Gallery and the Four Seasons Hotels. Robert Linsley lives in Kitchener where he is Adjunct Professor of Fine Art at the University of Waterloo.

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Nick Ostoff

Peripheries

April 12 – May 12, 2007

Diaz Contemporary is pleased to present Toronto-based artist **Nick Ostoff's** first solo exhibition with the gallery. *Peripheries* is an exploration of the marginal public spaces found within and around the North American urban landscape. These are often the industrial non-spaces situated along the outskirts of cities, non-descript suburban areas, and various pedestrian spaces within the downtown core. In particular, Ostoff is concerned with certain elements within these spaces – fences, power lines, subway benches, parking lots, industrial buildings – that are so ubiquitous, so embedded within the complex fabric of contemporary urban life, that they have become almost imperceptible.

In *Peripheries*, Ostoff explores the ways in which exterior space is transformed through memory, absence, and the mechanics of photographic representation. Working from a variety of photographic source material, his painterly method is informed by reduction and restraint – colour is muted, contrast heightened and all figures and extraneous details are removed. Through this methodology, the image becomes so generalized and vacant that it functions like a blank yet luminous screen, inviting the viewer to enter the space through psychological and narrative projection.

The works in *Peripheries* are predominately based on Ostoff's own photographs taken in both Toronto and other North American cities over the past few years. With the aid of photographic framing and cropping the artist focuses on overlooked elements by removing the chaos of the surrounding context. Subsequently, through the act of painting, Ostoff removes the spatial and temporal specificity of the photographic source. Regardless of where these spaces and elements were once encountered, they are effectively re-located to an ambiguous realm that is both proximate to, yet completely removed from our quotidian experience.

Nick Ostoff graduated from the Ontario College of Art & Design in 1999. Since then, he has shown extensively throughout Canada and the United States and was a semifinalist in the 2005 RBC painting competition. Ostoff's work is included in important corporate and public collections including: Royal Bank of Canada, Osler Hoskin and Harcourt, Kleinfeldt Mychjlowycz Architects, McCarthy Tetrault, Agnes Etherington Art Centre (Queen's University) and Doris McCarthy Gallery (University of Toronto).

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