

JACK PIERSON

RECENT WORKS

PARIS DEBELLEYME

29 Thursday - 29 Saturday



Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is pleased to present an exhibition of new works by American artist Jack Pierson. The current show will be his fourth at our Paris gallery.

His photographic works have often been compared to images from road movies, movies whose rapturous race toward fulfilment have become etched into the American landscape. His favourite subjects are drawn mostly from his daily life as a contemporary artist: fragments of urban landscapes, still lives of ordinary objects, homoerotic nudes, evocative words worked into collages or transformed into neons. Far from simply seeking to create traditional variations on the American Dream, the artist seeks instead to explore the flip side of the concept, searching to express what he calls "the tragedy inherent in the pursuit of glamour".

His technical choices underline this poetic quest: photographic images imbued with saturated colours, at times intentionally overexposed and out of focus; all serve to convey a heightened sense of emotion. By capturing an instant in this way, Pierson obtains an idealised version of daily life which borders on the cinematic: photography for him then becomes "a decoration of life", a fictitious version of the world more brimming with beauty than our own. What he asks of the viewer, is to identify with the simple fascination with which he created these images, to relate to the subjects and the feelings they express, but without losing sight of the notion that they are but an extension of his own desires.

Though Jack Pierson is known predominantly for his photographic works, this new show presents a series of roughly 20 paintings and two word sculptures. Pierson has painted enigmatic portraits, filled with emotion and spirituality. This choice of medium and theme are a rarity for the artist. In the faces and bodies, sometimes only partially drawn, the features are spontaneous, incisive, almost 'sculpted'. The series is predominantly in black and white, when colour is introduced and joined to the rough yet pure lines, the result is reminiscent of tribal art. The drawings and the patterns, criss-cross, repeat and superimpose themselves. Each line, each wrinkle, each scar, evokes the idea of an imprint, an emotion, an etched memory. And it is in this way that this new work explores the intimacy and timelessness of portraiture, and takes its place among the artist's rich and varied body of work.

Jack Pierson was born in 1960 in Plymouth, Massachusetts. While studying at the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston, he became associated with a group of artists who would become known as the Boston School, of which Nan Goldin was also a central figure. Today Jack Pierson lives and works in both New York City and Southern California.