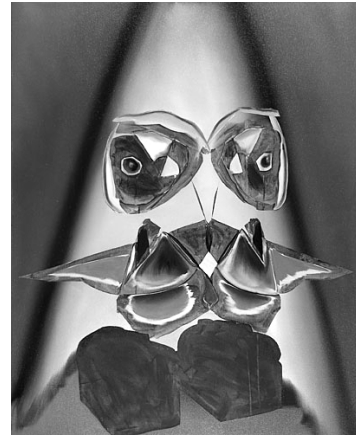


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The Mouth Of A Monk Is Like An Oven

MATTHEW BROWN

Opening: 30 January 7-9pm

Exhibition: January 30 - March 7, 2009

Clint Roenisch is pleased to present *The Mouth Of A Monk Is Like An Oven*, a solo show of recent paintings by the Vancouver-based Matthew Brown. These works are based on initial drawings that are run through a series of automated functions in image-processing software where they get reconfigured into junk graphics, fractal shapes and skewed optical sequences. This imagery is then painted onto canvas through an imaginative filter rather than mimed exactly. Lee Henderson has written that "the organizing principle behind Brown's work is not familiar but the imagery somehow is. Like looking at your mother's sister." The paintings suggest a proto-portrait or object-portrait of vaguely familiar, highly suggestive forms. Here humanoid and anthropomorphic shapes interact with each other through cryptic, evocative gestures. Others seem to stand totemically alone, singular and central against acidic backgrounds, resistant to narrative scrutiny. Sean Alward has written that "it is exceedingly difficult to make oil paint look unfamiliar after more than 500 years of continuous use, but Brown achieves this to some degree through an explicitly digital sensibility. These paintings could not have been painted even three decades ago." When Brown was included in the 2007 exhibition "Paint: a psychedelic primer" at the Vancouver Art Gallery (curated by the acclaimed Vancouver painter Neil Campbell), Monica Szewczyk noted that "[Brown's] images are animated by a tension between a computer brain, which I think has something to do with [their] alien quality, and the warm, human tactility of paint." Brown himself has written that "the objects in the pictures have all the qualities that our brains are designed to recognize in 'things.' The objects have parts, anatomy, etc. The figures look like they have handy places to be grasped, or bits look like they do something. The things look functional. They have tops and bottoms and ends, and attach together in rational ways. Some of the pieces have been made into faces by a quick and dumb technique of simply mirroring them. Each of these faces or figures carry their own attitude, they are very particular in the way they present personality, establish social space, flirt with our sense of types and style. They are aggressive and the deadpan delivery functions as a social pose. The paintings take a strong social position vis a vis its audience."

Matthew Brown completed his BFA at the University of Victoria where he studied with Sandra Meigs (August 1998) and his MFA at Concordia University, Montreal, studying with Janet Werner and Eleanor Bond (September 2006). Brown was a finalist in the RBC Painting Competition twice (2005 & 2006). In 2006, he won the prize for Western Canada. He was included in the 2008 group exhibition *Carte Blanche Vol.2: Painting at the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art*.