

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**TOBY ZIEGLER: POST-HUMAN PARADISE**



**5 OCTOBER - 12 NOVEMBER 2016**

**PRIVATE VIEW: TUESDAY, 4 OCTOBER, 6 - 8 PM**

**THURSDAY, 6 OCTOBER, 6.30 - 8 PM: TOBY ZIEGLER IN CONVERSATION WITH LEV MANOVICH**

**Simon Lee Gallery, London, in collaboration with Artsy's OnSite series**

Simon Lee Gallery is proud to announce a solo exhibition of new work by Toby Ziegler, his fourth exhibition with the gallery.

Matisse's *Large Reclining Nude (The Pink Nude)*, 1936 provides the starting point for Ziegler's new series of paintings and a new two channel video work (all 2016). Ziegler was drawn to the painting's embodiment of a shift from figuration to abstraction. The development of Matisse's painting between May and October 1935 was documented in a series of 22 black and white slides that illustrate the painting's evolution from illusionistic to two dimensional space. Through this surviving documentation we can see how Matisse edited, cropped, flattened and stretched the body in its context to greater effect in the painting, retaining the human figure, whilst tightening and streamlining the motif like a piece of typography or a logo.

This analogue animation of two dimensional work and the painterly process is echoed in Ziegler's two channel video. Looping simultaneously on two large freestanding LED screens, the first screen depicts digital images of *The Pink Nude* which Ziegler sourced through Google image searches. Using a digital technique of progressive pixellation, Ziegler presents a systematic degradation and abstraction of the reproduction of Matisse's painting. The second screen shows the results of Ziegler resubmitting each modified *Pink Nude* image back into Google image. We witness the imaginary painted body disintegrate as perversely Google summons fleshy corporeal images such as sickly sweet pink mouths, feet, and make-up whilst the next screen fades to reveal images of Chinese currency, clouds and idyllic skies.

Ziegler homes in on our predisposition to find resonance and meaning in incongruous images and forms; the slow pace of transformation of the films' frames enhances our ability and desire to make connections whilst simultaneously seducing, repulsing and evoking ambivalence. This is Google as Delphic Oracle, I Ching or collective unconscious, revealing the associations that a particular configuration of colour and tone provoke in the hive-mind of Google users. This transfiguration performed by Google, from image to pure data and back again, acts as an analogy for Ziegler's process as a painter. Meticulously painting and reproducing the *Pink Nude* image on large scale aluminium supports, Ziegler brings art history in and out of focus, utilising analogue means to zoom in and out of the image, inverting it, tessellating it, saturating or paring back the colours to black and white, before further subjection to painting on top of the image and sanding it back with a rotary sander.

This process echoes how computers process images, losing information and data through translation of the image and recreating a facsimile that perpetuates a new visual currency for us to consume and disseminate. This homage and corrosion of the image sets up a playful surface tension that is utterly compelling and of its time.

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The resultant paintings shimmer and glow, with the scale, process and layers of painting and light reflective sanding marks simultaneously recalling Roman graphics, pixels and screen resolutions – a marriage of past, present, future that situate and question the body in relation to technology, the object and the image.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

**Toby Ziegler** was born in 1972 in London where he studied at Central St Martin's College of Art and Design, and currently lives and works in London. Major solo institutional exhibitions include *Expanded Narcissistic Envelope*, Hepworth Wakefield, UK (2014) and *Toby Ziegler*, New Art Centre at Roche Court Sculpture Park, Salisbury, UK (2014). Other solo exhibitions include *The Cripples*, at Old Burlington car park, London (2012); *The Alienation of Objects*, Zabudowicz Collection, London, which travelled to Sarisalvo, Finland, New Art Gallery, Walsall, UK and Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, Finland (2011-2012).

Major institutional group shows include *My Abstract World*, me Collectors Room Berlin / Olbricht Collection, Berlin, Germany (2016); *Private Utopia: Contemporary Works from the British Council Collection*, Tokyo Station Gallery, Tokyo, Japan (exh. cat.), which travelled to Itami City Museum of Art, Itami, Japan, Kochi Museum of Art, Kochi, Japan, and Okayama Museum of Art, Okayama, Japan (2015); *Conflict and Collisions: New Contemporary Sculpture*, The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield, UK (2014); *The Red Queen*, Museum of Old and New Art, Tasmania, Australia (2013); *Gold*, Belvedere, Vienna, Austria (2012); *The Future Demands Your Participation*, Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai, China (2010); *Newspeak: British Art Now*, The State Hermitage, St. Petersburg, Russia and The Saatchi Gallery, London (2009-2010); *Hamsterwheel*, initiated by Franz West, Malmö Konsthall, Sweden (2008); *Recent Abstraction, British Art Displays 1500-2007* at Tate Britain, London (2007).

His work is part of major private and public collections including The Arts Council of England; The British Council; Tate Britain; Saatchi Gallery; François Pinault Foundation; Zabudowicz Collection; Goss-Michael Foundation; Kadist Art Foundation; British Airways Collection; Hudson Valley Centre for Contemporary Art and Museum of Old and New Art, Tasmania.

## SPECIAL EVENT

**THURSDAY, 6 OCTOBER, 6.30 – 8 PM: TOBY ZIEGLER IN CONVERSATION WITH LEV MANOVICH, Simon Lee Gallery, London, in collaboration with Artsy's OnSite series**

Event 6.30pm arrival for 7pm start, Simon Lee Gallery, 12 Berkeley Street, London W1J 8DT  
RSVP essential: onsite@artsy.net

**Dr. Lev Manovich** is the author and editor of eight books including *Data Drift* (RIXC, 2015), *Software Takes Command*, (Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), *Soft Cinema: Navigating the Database* (The MIT Press, 2005), and *The Language of New Media* (The MIT Press, 2001) which was described as "the most suggestive and broad ranging media history since Marshall McLuhan." He appeared on the list of "25 People Shaping the Future of Design" in 2013 and the list of "50 Most Interesting People Building the Future" in 2014. Manovich is a Professor of Computer Science at The Graduate Center, CUNY, and a Director of the Software Studies Lab that uses methods from computer science, media design and humanities to analyze big cultural data such as millions of Instagram images. The lab's most recent projects were commissioned by MoMA, New Public Library, and Google. *Selfiecity* won Golden Award in Best Visualization Project category in the global competition in 2014; *On Broadway* project received Silver Award in the same category in 2015.

This event is a special collaboration with **Artsy OnSite** - a global series of events featuring the world's most critically-acclaimed contemporary artists and current exhibitions. In collaboration with Artsy's network of globally-renowned partner galleries, museums and other non-profit institutions, over thirty events have taken place since the initiative was launched in April 2015. OnSite events are conversations with artists, curator-led exhibition tours, studio visits, panel discussions, performances, film screenings, and book launches. Events have taken place in New York, Los Angeles, London, Brussels, Berlin, Munich, and Hong Kong. <https://www.artsy.net/>

Image: Toby Ziegler, *Post-human paradise*, 2016, Oil on aluminium, 100 x 138 cm (39 3/8 x 54 3/8 in.)

For further press information, images and interview requests please contact Julia Kelly Kennedy:  
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