

## Robert Boynes

Robert Boynes' recent paintings continue his interest in depicting spaces and moments of human interaction. The images are highly mediated, initially worked from photographs either taken by the artist, or from published sources. Boynes takes details of the photographs to construct his compositions, using computer technology, and they are made into silk screens, then further manipulated as they are painted on to the canvas. The finished paintings appear as fragments of experience, brief passages of time and space through which bodies pass.

The settings of the original source material are places where there is a high volume of human traffic: the shopping malls, airports, and railway stations of large cities. In Boynes' paintings the human figures are anonymous bodies in these urban spaces. Through the process of selecting, editing, cropping and repeating, the artist mimics the effect of the modern on human perceptions, where experience is mediated through technology and representation.

Using photography as the basis for the imagery in these paintings, Boynes makes a direct connection with early modernist visual practice. Figures and objects appear to move in and out of the frames of the works, and are sometimes indistinct from each other, and from their own shadows. One is reminded of the snapshot composition of Degas' city paintings, and Balla's representations of movement in the streets. In employing details and fragments as the focus of the works, Boynes presents them almost as if they were spliced from larger narrative, as if they were moments from a film.

There is a sense of mystery about these paintings, something that is opaque and unresolved. In Antonioni's film *Blow Up* 1966 the photographic detail that may or may not be a body becomes less distinct as the image is enlarged, and the photographer's own uncertain reality is projected onto it. In Boynes' paintings the technology of screen-printing provides another filter through which reality is seen as ambiguous and elusive. The artist's final tactile manipulation of paint on the surface gives the works another dimension, an edge, a flicker of materiality over the mediated lens of modern experience.

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