

JOHANNES VOGT

“Behind The Scenes”

Benoit Platéus

October 12–November 13, 2016

Opening Reception: Wednesday, October 12, 2016 6-8 PM

Johannes Vogt Gallery is pleased to present “Behind The Scenes,” the first solo exhibition by Brussels-based artist Benoit Platéus at the gallery. The exhibition features new paintings from Platéus’s Behind the Scenes series, atmospheric canvases fashioned from old movie posters. In the works exhibited, Platéus uses painting not to represent but to blur an image—to emphasize as much as to obscure.

To create the Behind the Scenes paintings, Platéus reverse-mounts movie posters—often posters for old B-movies or forgotten films, which he sources online and in dedicated shops—on canvas and then paints directly onto them. Though the posters face backwards, a few details show through: fragments of text, outlines of a figure. Platéus paints in response to these, adding or erasing details with a faint pastel palette so that they don’t quite resolve into comprehensible information. Instead, the details form subtle fields of color on the surfaces of the paintings, which hover delicately between abstraction and figuration.

Platéus is interested in the nature of images: how they transmit information, how they mutate and break down, how they represent and generate reality. Found images often serve as a starting point for his work—as in the earlier series *Ghostburn*, in which the artist re-photographed archival images, allowing the resulting photographs to be warped by sunlight. With *Ghostburn* as well as *Behind the Scenes*, found images incite a sense of nostalgia for a lost, or rapidly degrading, past.

This sense of impermanence, of the fragility of visual culture, extends throughout Platéus’ practice. Central to his work is the idea of the *fade*, referring both to the material effects of his intervention into the posters, but also to a temporal process—to the gradual aging and sun-bleaching of images over time. Yet despite the pigments Platéus uses to conceal, traces remain. And those traces enable the viewer to “unfold”—the posters often come to Platéus literally folded, and their creases remain visible even once they have been applied to canvas—the paintings, allowing their multiple layers of meaning to emerge. With these paintings, Platéus suggests new ways that we might see, and read, images.

BENOIT PLATÉUS was born in 1972 in Liège, Belgium. He lives and works in Brussels. Recent solo exhibitions include Skibum MacArthur, Los Angeles; Galerie Albert Baronian, Brussels; Annarumma Gallery, Naples; and Galerie Jeanroch Dard, Paris. His work has been exhibited at Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Karma, New York; Almine Rech, London; among elsewhere, and is included in several collections around the world, among them the Fond National d’Art Contemporain, France and the Musée d’Ixelles, Belgium.