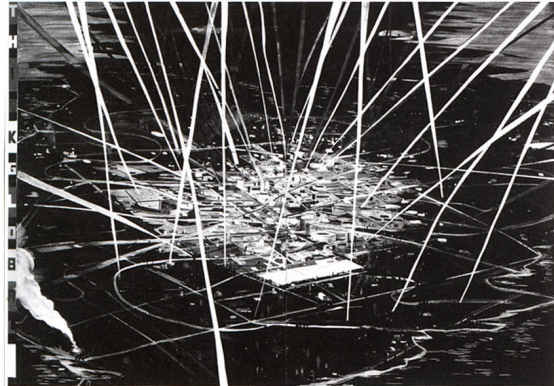


JULES DE BALINCOURT

ZACH FEUER GALLERY

In “Unknowing Man’s Nature,” a joyfully eclectic and disjointed show, de Balincourt demonstrates that he is equally at ease toying with faux thrift store painting aesthetics as he is mastering abstraction’s compositional complexities. He displays a knack for working on any size canvas; from the small panels habitually favored by weekend landscape painters, to massive canvases yearning for a museum wall to hang on. He also has an affinity for a wide range of color schemes, as equally prone to slapping on the most garish combination of fluorescent colors on a canvas as he is to steeping a painting in subtle shades of rose or opting for a color palette reminiscent of a Hawaiian shirt.

Consistent with his previous bodies of works, most of the figurative paintings in this show display a distinctive retro feel. De Balincourt lines the margin of many of them with bold block lettering lines, urging us to engage with such contemporary concerns as *Think Globally, Act Locally* — by far the most solid and impressive work in the show — or to *Untitled (Remembering Our Great Dead Heroes)*. He throws in a pixelated portrait of a jihadist to make sure there are no doubts as to the era of his political preoccupations, while a Crayola-hued map of China invokes bygone Cold War fears to address a current geopolitical reality with an admonishing *We Warned You about China*. As for the eponymous *Unknowing Man’s Nature* — the flashiest canvas in terms of colors with



JULES DE BALINCOURT, *Think Globally, Act Locally*, 2007. Oil and spray paint on panel, 243 x 335 cm. Courtesy Zach Feuer Gallery, New York.

multiple shades of red, orange and gold as well as a burst of white in its midst — it commands attention like no other with a flurry of light rays covering its surface. Some of his paintings also create a bit of puzzlement with, for instance, a work in which a clunk of a boulder tied up in ropes lies in the middle of a road, leaving the viewer slightly perplexed. With compositions as exuberant and bold as his use of color, de Balincourt demonstrates that despite a few variants in the quality in this current body of work, he is a painter to reckon with.

Isabelle Dupuis