



SALON 94

TimeOut London, March 19 2013

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Painting from the Zabludowicz Collection: Part I

★★★

Zabludowicz Collection. ► May 5.

While there's no theme to this two-part show, the linchpin is German maestro Albert Oehlen, whose canvases in the final room act as a kind of blueprint for the two other, younger, American artists. He's represented mainly by his trademark, noughties style: a cacophonous, delirious (albeit sometimes formulaic) amalgamation of muddy dribbles, neon spraypaint blasts, computerish squiggles, ink-jet fragments and textual graphics – all wildly interwoven to create a knotty, nervy sensation of over-abundance. But there's also an earlier, figurative piece from 1982 – depicting some doomy, shadowy architectural space, the thick paint broken up by glinting mirror panels – as well as an intriguing work from his finger-painting series, in which the vaguely faecal mark-making (see the brown smears of 'Evolution' of 2002, pictured above) comes off as both a parody and a celebration of the notion of the artist's transformative touch, the vaingloriousness of male creativity.

It's this ironic, macho sensibility, then, which gets taken up by Matthew Chambers's tall paintings. There's a giant, spike-wristbanded



fist, and some rough-and-ready abstract works made from cut-up, paint-splattered strips of canvas. Yet the faux-pretentiousness of the titles – 'The Heroic Subject of All Study', 'Smells of Chestnuts in the Streets' – together with a pose of punky, lo-fi

disaffection, simply ends up feeling over-rehearsed, too similar to a host of other artists.

Rather more successful is Francesca DiMattio's work, which pushes the whole jumbly, overlapping aesthetic into a more flouncy, graphic, vaguely neo-Victorian direction (pictured left). Her use of thread and floral wallpaper, or her totemic assemblages of broken vases and ceramic animals, may over-egg their sense of decoration and domesticity, but her smaller paintings combine Greco-Roman busts with patterns taken from Mexican wrestling masks to good effect. Here, she's hit on something that, precisely because it's much less busy, feels stronger, odder and more wittily disconcerting.

Gabriel Coxhead



Das ist gut Albert Oehlen, 'Evolution', 2002 (top); work by Francesca DiMattio (below)

THE BOTTOM LINE A German lesson in painting perspectives.