

Chris Bond

Artist Statement

*The Last Days of Painting*

Ryan Renshaw Gallery

The problematic position of originality in contemporary art finds a forum in a new series of eight meticulously painted fictional art magazine covers. Titled simply 'painting', they profile eight fictional artists, each with a featured artwork on the cover that has been generated by an online image search linked to their name.

These works exist as fragments of my artistic personality. Each of the profiled artists have been on my mind for some time- fantastic figures who share my obsessions and carry them off in different directions. Their names - Patricia Bolt, Ev Dennis, Jarvis Extract, Nelson Jakes, Judi Ronson, Ted Sones, Tor Rasmussen and Ursula Weiss – have been imagined by me, along with an estimation of the kind of work they might make, before being entered into the *google images* search engine.

I've found working with the resulting generated imagery challenging. I've limited myself to imagery from websites whose description features both the first and last names of the imagined artists. And I've tried to limit the amount that I manipulate that imagery. Some of the results were very literally interpreted – the portrait of Jarvis Extract, for example, painted photo-realistically, while other imagery demanded some form of adjustment to match my imagined personality of the artist.

The painted text that floats over the top of the imagery has been limited to the essential – the front cover features the magazine title 'painting' on the top right, a price description/issue number on the top left, and the artist's name below. The spine features the magazine title and issue number. I've left off article titles, other artist names, and ISBN numbers.

The internal pages of the magazine – visible at the edges – are made of canvas. Despite their convincingly illusionistic qualities, I wanted these works to be clearly made of the materials of which most paintings are made – linen and canvas.

The magazines are monthly, featuring dates set within 1999, a time of considerable anxiety – fitting given the angst that drives much of my thinking and practice. The works themselves seem to carry some of that angst in the myriad of cracks and stains that break across their surfaces.

The title of the show, *The Last Days of Painting*, is deliberately obscure – does it refer to the much debated 'end of painting'? Or is it a literal reference to the last issues of *painting* magazine before it perhaps collapsed?

I often speculate about the existence of other artists who may be making similar work to me. And I regularly search for other Chris Bond's on *google* to see what they're up to. That said, I don't look at a lot of contemporary painting, I imagine it and that's enough for me. This current series of works is about that sort of conjecture- it's about multiple possibilities, and, despite my best efforts, the inability to escape myself.