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Uber Art and LAXART continue their collaborative journal, Ten by Ten, in June 07, with -

Jeffrey Uslip on Jenifer K. Wofford
Gean Moreno on Brian Stechschulte
Sharon Mizota on Anita Ragusa
Laura Richard Janku on Chris Christian
Anjali Gupta on Brad Moore
Tim Ivison on Brian Bress
Melissa Lo on Elena Bajo
David Drogin on Simon Aldridge
Jason Hill on Michele Jaquis
Naima Keith on Vincent Johnson

<http://www.uber.com/tenbyten>

- excerpt -

DAVID DROGIN on SIMON ALDRIDGE



A virtual aesthetic conflates with traditional painter's practice in Simon Aldridge's paintings, based on landscapes from videogames or, most recently (as in "Roxy" and "Tyburn," 2007), on his own photographs of surfing locales and public parks. Aldridge selects computer-generated panoramas that are cropped and abstracted in a method drawn from virtual sources and distortions of the monitor/video screen; simultaneously, he evokes the physicality and objecthood of traditional painting with canvas, oils, painterly surfaces, and wooden supports. Sites that had become virtual, evacuated of their physicality, are emphatically returned to the material world of palpable experience. Literal and metaphorical topographies of place, leisure activities, artistic tradition and the digital age resonate in each painting's subject and appearance.

Aldridge engages age-old and ongoing concerns in visual representation. Like Thomas Demand

and James Casebere, Aldridge creates conspicuously artificial representations of representations, manipulations at least twice removed from original sources: de-signified signs are recognizable yet freed from semantic anchors, querying the practice and validity of representation. Aldridge is also rooted in painting's tradition of highlighting how technological innovation affects visual experience. A few related examples: with the invention of one-point perspective, mid-15th century paintings proposed a manner of seeing the world with mathematical rigor; the 19th century invention of photography catalyzed new painterly discourses about light, movement, and realism; in the 1880s, optical and color theory determined the visual discourses of Divisionism and Pointillism; and, in ways that still resonate, the mechanical aesthetic and ubiquity of mass-produced culture informed mid-20th-century Pop art and its offspring.

For the digital generation, Aldridge engages this theme with the savvy anachronisms of his sources and technique. In his words, the paintings "highlight the fluid border between the artificial and the real," but they also emphasize our growing inability to discern, or our desire to conflate, what that border tentatively separates.

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