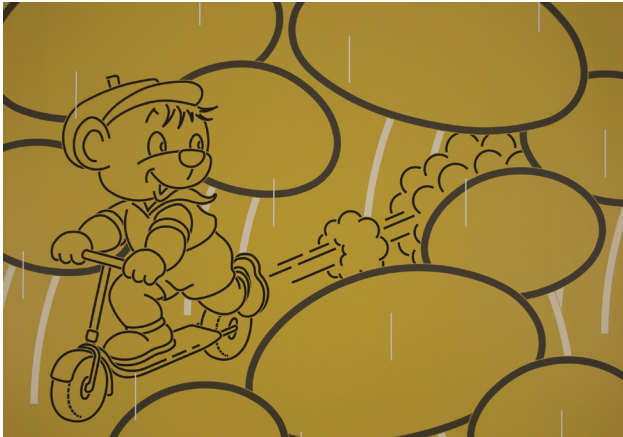


The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

258 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877
Tel 203.438.4519, Fax 203.438.0198, www.aldrichart.org



Gerard Hemsworth, *I Told You Not To*, 2009.

Gerard Hemsworth Hidden Agenda

June 21, 2009, to January 10, 2010

Although his paintings are seemingly unproblematic, simple and innocent, upon closer examination the works of British artist Gerard Hemsworth become confrontational, disconcerting, and provocative in a slightly uncomfortable way.

Beginning on June 21, 2009, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum is presenting fifteen works comprising Hemsworth's first solo museum exhibition in the United States. His long career has been devoted to a careful consideration of painting's options, meanings, and tactics. Hemsworth's visual language is comprised of line drawings of cartoon-like images, open spaces, and flat muted colors; representational works that have the familiarity of both modernist paintings and storybook pictures. He has developed a project that has allowed him to undermine the seriousness of high modernist art and cultural values, while at the same time providing a space that questions their possibility.

Writers have compared Hemsworth's work to the 19th-century romantic landscape painter Casper-David Friedrich, as well as to the contemporary sculptor best known for his giant reproductions of banal objects in stainless steel, Jeff Koons. The absurdity of this gulf indicates the ability of Hemsworth's paintings to straddle the sublime and the ridiculous. His paintings are both insistent and subversive, questioning the values and assumptions that the viewer brings to the work—the hidden agenda for which we cannot account.

Hidden Agenda will be on view through January 3, 2010. The public were invited to Meet the Artist and to celebrate the exhibition on June 21, and on June 19 Gerard Hemsworth gave a private gallery talk about his newly installed exhibition.

Museum funding provided, in part, by the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Special thanks to the opening weekend event sponsors: Collyer Catering, Ridgefield Magazine, HSBC Bank, WSHU Public Radio, and the Harry Zarin Fund.

The Artist:

Gerard Hemsworth has exhibited internationally since the 1970s. He lives and works in London, where he is the Professor of Fine Art at Goldsmiths, University of London.

The Museum:

The Aldrich is one of the few non-collecting contemporary art museums in the United States. Founded on Ridgefield's historic Main Street in 1964, the Museum enjoys the curatorial independence of an alternative space while maintaining the registrarial and art-handling standards of a national institution. Exhibitions feature

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work by emerging and mid-career artists, and education programs help adults and children to connect to today's world through contemporary art. The Museum is located at 258 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877. All exhibitions and programs are handicapped accessible. Free on-site parking. Regular Museum hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 12 noon to 5 pm. For more information call 203.438.4519.

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