

ERASURE

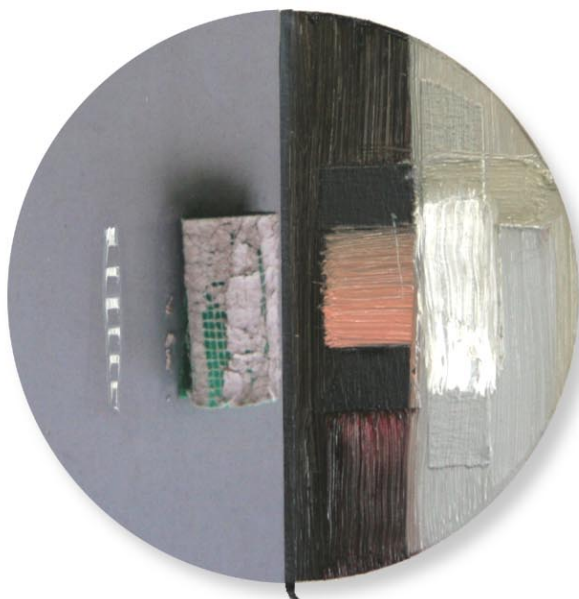


CHRISTOPHER JONES



Above: Erasure Study no. 2, photomontage, tape & foamcore, 13 x 18 x 7 cm
Front flap: Erasure Study no. 1, photomontage, tape & foamcore, 15 x 13 x 7 cm

Christopher Jones lives and works in north east England and is Senior Lecturer in Painting at Newcastle University. He studied at Newcastle University and Chelsea School of Art, London and between 1987-89 he was a Monbusho Research Scholar at Kyoto University of Arts, Japan. Over the past 15 years he has worked with artists from Germany, India, Japan, Korea and Slovakia on a number of diverse artist-led projects. He has recently received awards from Arts Council England >>



In-Between no.5, oil, tape & photograph on steel, 7.5 cm diameter

and the Arts & Humanities Research Council, and currently holds a Northern Print Bursary. His recent exhibitions include solo shows at Northern Print, Newcastle (2007), Kyoto Art Centre, Japan (2006), Art Space A1, Nagoya, Japan (2006) and Galerie am Markt, Schwaebisch Hall, Germany (2004).

'Erasure' is the result of a 4-week visit to Seoul as an Asem Duo Fellow.

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Christopher Jones has focused on the theme of memory as a painter for several years. For example, his solo exhibition 'Trace-Retrace' at Kyoto Art Centre last year explored his experience of revisiting Japan in 2006, eighteen years after having spent two years living there. On his return he revisited the apartment where he had lived from 1987 to 1989, yet he found the building had been totally demolished. 'Trace Retrace' examined how something that had disappeared could be recreated in the form of a painting or print. However, he neither illustrated the image nor was interested in documenting, reproducing, or describing the memory. Rather he explored the structure of memory making use of painting, and conventional and digital forms of image reproduction.

Although this exhibition, 'Erasure', shares the same root as 'Trace-Retrace', there is a distinctive difference. Here, in order to make a piece of work Jones has to erase something - an image, or physical material - from it. By cutting out the image, or by using a negative mark, Jones discovers the act of erasure as part of his working method. Therefore, it can be said that his methodology here is something beyond how to recall or 'remake' memory. Jones examines the possibility of the act of 'erasure' as a way of looking into our way of life. His works make the viewers look at the empty space, which leads them to pay attention to the presence of the absence.

Although the subject of his works might relate to memory or the substance of memory, I consider that his real interest seems to be the absence, the void, and what the absence can create. And what he erases seems to be not only the image of the memory but also something of the act of painting. No one can deny that he is a painter, however, there is a real paradox that Jones uses the method of erasure in order to paint.

By erasing or painting the time and space of the void, he crosses over the gap between absence and presence, between past and present. His activity of painting seems to resemble the *dhyana* of traditional Buddhism the method of which is so ambiguous that it is sometimes hard for us to access. Yet, Christopher Jones's works of painting or erasing are refreshing as the methodology and its outcome is so visual.

IhnBum Lee

Perhaps another title for this exhibition might be "In-Between", for part of what interests me about the idea of erasure is its implication of change, from one state to another. When something is erased, we register subconsciously what was and what might be. We are caught 'in-between' in terms of both the physical and the temporal.

Sometimes what is left behind when we remove something - its trace or residue - has a particular charge to it. Part of this is due, I think, to the way in which when there is less we are prompted to look and think harder, to find a different level of connection. This can be seen, and felt, on a grand scale in the renowned 'empty' site of dismantled temple architecture at Ise, Japan. More often we come across it on a smaller scale and closer at hand: for example in incidental fashion in the poetic fragments of coloured tape that cling to Seoul's lampposts after flyers and posters have been torn down.

Each of the works here record or respond to erasure and the sense of the in-between. It also seems to me that these ideas have an echo in the artist's routine: for the artist, in attempting to move his or her work forward, editing and erasing in a process of clearing away the inessential is often the key.

Thanks for translation & interpretation: Cho, Saemi.

Christopher Jones



Erasure no.9, oil & tape on steel, 4.5 x 8 cm

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Cling no. 3, digital print, 100 x 67 cm

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