

PATRICIA SWEETOW GALLERY

77 GEARY STREET MEZZANINE SAN FRANCISCO CA 94108 415.788.5126 F 788.5207

New American Paintings

Volume 11, Issue 6

January 2007

Juried Exhibition-in-Print No.67

A Catalog of the Winners' Work from the 2006 Pacific Coast Competition

JONATHAN BURSTEIN



This body of work consists of self-portraits collaged out of contemporary art magazines. The magazines are used as raw material in an alchemical process whereby representations of art are reduced to quanta of color and texture, then reconstituted into representations of an artist.

Form takes precedence over content or reputation in the course of distilling the magazine images into a palette from which to work. Old Masters, young art stars, video, sculpture, and fashion advertisements are treated equally in the search for the specific shapes and hues the piece requires. The result is a conceptual and visual layering that conflates historic and contemporary art, the famous and the unknown, culture and commerce and disparate materials and traditions.

These images represent both actual and figurative manifestations of an aesthetic metabolism. If as physical bodies, "we are what we eat," then as a visual artist, I am what I see. The myriad images digested in the perusal of these magazines become part of my way of seeing, exerting subtle or not-so-subtle influence on my own art-making. As the figures in this work are composites of many artworks, so is my own practice an admixture of styles, methods, and inspirations. Giving form to, literally "embodying" this process, suggests that in life, as in art, we are more than the sum of our parts.