

# MODERN PAINTERS

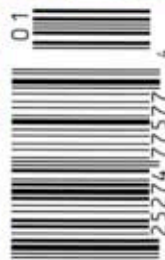
**GOES WEST:** Ed Ruscha, David Hockney,  
Steve Martin, Burning Man, Laura Owens, Dave Muller, Walter Hopps  
**PLUS** William Boyd, Antony Gormley, Chapman Brothers

SPRING  
2003

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24 hot tickets for the LA scene

# art angeelenos

MAT GLEASON

**T**he stereotype of mellow Los Angeles has infected its art scene. The source of power here is not commercial galleries nor daring museums, but rather a web of art schools churning out hundreds of graduates at an average \$50,000 two-year tuition fee per head. Every LA artist seems to be teaching or preparing lesson plans instead of working in the studio. A passive 'collegiality' has ended all impassioned arguments. Nobody will say a bad word about anyone. Clubby pedigrees have displaced debate. You can spot the CV of the LA artist: it emphasises teaching experience instead of solo shows. The stagnation is evident in the

New York art glossies, with LA coverage confined to back pages reviewing bloodless exhibitions of tepid tenured radicals. Los Angeles once dreamed of usurping New York's centrality to the American art world. Manhattan now safely offers backhanded praise to Southern California's art schools; the implication is that everyone here is starting out as a student or is washed up as faculty. Despite Big Apple self-assurance, not every great artist here is moving east. **Here are four trends dominating West Coast dialogue**, and 24 Los Angeles-based artists who have achieved status in the marketplace and/or the limelight regardless (or in spite) of any academic affiliation.

## PAUL PAIEMENT

There is precision engineering and then there is Paul Paiement. His dexterous hybrids of nature and machine possess a conceptual wickedness; in an age of software as a preferred means of exact drawing, Paiement dazzles with the hand, neither follower nor throwback. Combining the disparate can be all the rage when simple juxtaposition will satisfy the craving for something new. Paiement does not fuse two elements for the postmodern satisfaction of proving they don't go together except through irony; his mergers are a means of creation, concept and commentary. And with his rendering skill, a way of showing off a little, too.

### Paul Paiement

*Hybrids F-Zoniopoda Omnicopter*

2002

egg tempera on panel, 50.8 x 73.7 cm.

Courtesy Heather Marx Gallery, San Francisco

