

# DIAZ CONTEMPORARY

**Nick Ostoff**

***Some New Paintings***

**8 September to 16 October 2010**

**Opening Wednesday 8 September from 6 to 9**

Diaz Contemporary is pleased to present Nick Ostoff's third solo show with the gallery. In this show, we present a selection of paintings culled from a larger body of work made over the past year and a half. Ostoff is known for his photo-realistic representations of quotidian urban spaces, but recently has moved in a different direction. By reducing tonal gradations, removing details, and altering colour, he balances the imagery on the cusp of reductivist abstraction.

In this exhibition, Ostoff has taken these explorations even further. Like his previous work, many are inspired by play between light and shadow within the urban landscape. Unlike his previous work, they no longer suggest actual spaces within the world. These works represent Ostoff's interest in exploring unique space within a painting itself, and in foregrounding the tension between minimalist compositional structures and dynamic surface treatments. Great attention is paid to the peripheral elements of the picture plane, such as edges, borders and corners. Moreover, the notion of spatial demarcation extends out to the installation as a whole, which is inspired by an activation of the space between and around each painting. For example, in *Untitled Diptych*, which is installed in a corner, two quasi-identical paintings hung in close proximity at 90-degree angle creates an intimate, uniquely specialized painterly environment.

Overall, Ostoff's work evinces a desire to expand the parameters of his painterly process, allowing room for revisions and deliberations, unpredictability and uncertainties, and changing course. This work focuses on the value of intuition, and of generating ideas through painting, rather than using painting as a tool to execute a pre-determined idea.

Toronto-based Nick Ostoff graduated from the Ontario College of Art & Design in 1999. Since then, he has shown extensively throughout Canada and the United States and was a semifinalist in the 2005 RBC painting competition. Ostoff's work is included in important corporate and public collections including: Royal Bank of Canada, Osler Hoskin and Harcourt, Kleinfeldt Mychjlowycz Architects, McCarthy Tetrault, Agnes Etherington Art Centre (Queen's University) and Doris McCarthy Gallery (University of Toronto). This Fall, he relocates to begin his MFA at the Art Institute of Chicago.

