

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

Sumpter, Helen. "In the studio Gordon Cheung." *Time Out London* (Aug 2008).

In the studio *Gordon Cheung*

Gordon Cheung's psychedelic-coloured paintings are a collage of stock market pages from the *Financial Times* with imagery of animals, figures and landscape. They explore ideas that include commerce, consumerism, structures of power, belief and control, ecological destruction and the language of painting. He has a studio in Bow.

Would I be right in thinking that all those portraits are of the deceased?

'That's correct, they're all famous faces taken from a website listing top ten celebrities earning from the crypt, including Elvis, Andy Warhol and Dr Seuss. We may live in a largely secular age but that need to believe in something or somebody hasn't gone – in part it's just been diverted to the cult of celebrity. The paint's deliberately dribbly because, in a way, they're also virtual zombies, and zombies in turn are the ultimate in consumerism – not only in

that they literally consume us but in the zombie film genre they tend to hang out a lot in shopping malls.'

What's the large painting we can see?

'It's called "Wilderness of Mirrors" and is a kind of play on, or metaphor for, sublime romantic landscape. The title is a phrase used by former CIA chief James Jesus Angleton to describe the world of espionage. So there's the suggestion that it's not nature that we're overwhelmed by now but information.'

You've been using stock and shares pages for a long time – do you own any?

'I have a few shares but I'm not a serious player. Although for some people worshipping the market can be another replacement for worshipping God.'

Interview: Helen Sumpter.

Gordon Cheung's work can be seen in the Maddox Arts Summer Show until Sept 5 (see Mayfair to Sloane Square).

