Carruth, Shane. "Gordon Cheung." *I-D Magazine* (September 2005).

GORDON CHEUNG challenges nature, re-rooting it in the techno-sublime. His paintings take on the brave new world of technological overload, paranoia and everything salvaged from his '70s and '80s childhood. The half British half Chinese artist, with roots in both cultures, grew up somewhere in the middle, keenly aware that the world was moving quickly. "Cyber-space was developing, mobile phone technology was advancing, we were living in an electronic world," he notes. "The problem was that no-one could agree on how to describe it and in the end they turned to science-fiction writers." His structurally fatigued, uninhabited landscapes are constructed from a collaged ground of continuously falling financial numbers. As he says, "the financial listings are a coded language: they affect the world. People live and die because of these numbers." Black ink drowns out sections of the work, like a dense cybernetic acid rain running through the landscape. Neon rips, a tribute to the kitsch indulgence of Karachi's buses, eagles and nuclear warheads transpose the anaemic, monochromatic surface, seemingly tearing apart the painting from the inside out. "We have adapted at incredible speed, and there is bound to be fallout, we are extending into technology," considers Cheung. His latest works brings Scooby-Doo cartoon imagery in the form of graffiti implying a different sort of subversion: invisible presence and underground activity. Here he says, "It's about fear, and a paranoid society. The Scooby-Doo figures encapsulate that for me." Cheung's politics are humorous and intelligent rather than confrontational, looking at the other side of the coin – the billionaires and hackers who make and break this techno-sublime world. "They represent the extremes of counter-culture," he says. Yet the question remains how long can the hackers, the digital flanneurs of this new wild west, continue riding-out into the dense black sunsets? CHARLES DANBY
Gordon Cheung's work will be shown as part of British Art Show 6 which opens in BALTIC, Gateshead 24 September 2005 – January 8 2006, and then tours throughout 2006 to different cities across the UK. www.gordoncheung.com