

ARTFORUM



Yishai Jusidman, *The Economist Shuffle #18*, 2008, oil and egg tempera on wood panel, 28 1/2 x 30 1/2".

Yishai Jusidman

ANGSTROM GALLERY

2622 South La Cienega Boulevard

November 1–December 23

The fourteen uniformly sized paintings in Yishai Jusidman’s exhibition “The Economist Shuffle” derive from thumbnail images in the titular magazine’s “The World This Week” section. While the gesture of making paintings from photographs is all too familiar, Jusidman’s project resonates beyond trompe l’oeil gimmickry and the didactics of high/low culture that such a project inevitably elicits. The works have meticulous gold frames, a few have thick impasto grounds, and all offer a skillful application of egg tempera and oil that creates a notably traditional patina. The odd confluence of subjects—immigrants crossing a polluted river, firebombed cars, a man’s belly overhanging his jeans, patriotic politicians, an African mother and child wading in water—seems at once timely and eternal. The paintings slow the temporality of the photographs, collapsing the space between the weekly news and the longevity of fine art. Without informational captions, one gets the sense that these subjects have been the hallmark of our economy since the beginning of modern civilization; that leisure and struggle, fame and anonymity, excess and scarcity, peace and violence, have polarized our economies for eons. In light of the current financial crisis, one cannot help but contemplate the polysemy of the terms economist and economy here: the economy of form and composition in a photograph that was initially only one and a half by one and a half inches, the artist as economist in his selection of these particular images, the effect of the economy on the subjects pictured in these paintings, and the effect of the economy on the art market.

— Micol Hebron

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