

GERING & LÓPEZ GALLERY

# ARTnews

**reviews:** new york

## Michael Bevilacqua

**Gering & López**

In the seven acrylic-on-canvas paintings here, all 2010, Michael Bevilacqua refined his mash-up style, juxtaposing elements of high and low, abstraction and figuration, expressionistic flourish and mechanical reproduction. There were words spelled out ransom-note style in varying fonts alongside texts from roadside signage, cartoon characters facing off with graffiti stencils of skulls, and passages of fuzzy brushwork reined in by hard-edged boxes. The color scheme reflected that of comic books and supermarket circulars, a jumble of hues that seeks to grab attention while looking faded.

This allusion to disposable printed matter goes to the heart of Bevilacqua's enterprise. The paintings are diaristic in the sense that each tries to hold on to snippets of memory. The source of our memoirist's material, however, is not so much his quotidian experiences with family or friends as it is the onslaught of visual culture that unavoidably hurtles past every day.

The tour de force *Placebo Effect*, which lent its name to this show, lines up half a dozen versions of a misshapen head across a 14-foot-wide canvas. Each variant has its own style or distinguishing characteristic, rendered in outline or black silhouette or sickly blue on a striped ground, floating above a Nehru jacket or sporting a bandaged right eye. The expanse is further divided by a variety of background treatments and painted frames that make the figures and picture planes jump out and recede as the eye roams.

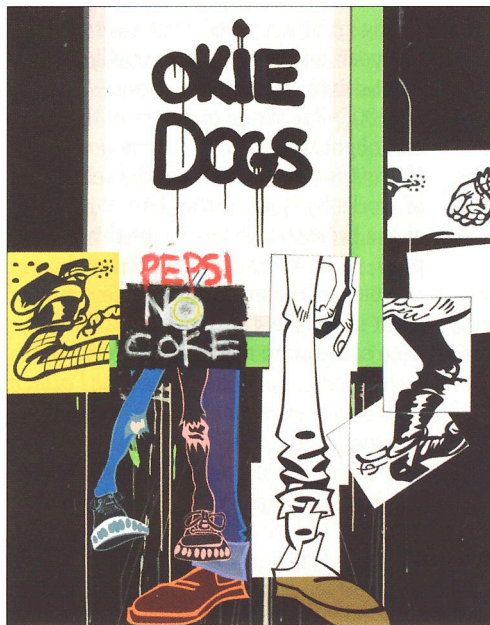
Bryant, Eric. "Michael Bevilacqua." *ARTnews*, October 2010, Vol. 109 #9, pp 107, 108.

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The effect here was of entering the artist's brain as he embarks on the visual equivalent of trying to remember a word on the tip of his tongue. Just as this half-forgotten character almost gels in his mind's eye, some other feature is recalled, both clarifying and fragmenting the picture.

—Eric Bryant



Michael Bevilacqua, *Okie Dogs*, 2010,  
acrylic on linen, 60" x 48" x 1½". Gering & López.