

Men's Vogue

art

dream catcher

With mesmerizing scenery and a hallucinatory touch, Peter Doig reaches that elusive place where the real and unreal meet.



Doig's *Grande Riviere* (2001-2) is one of his first works completed in Trinidad.

Canadian-born painter Peter Doig creates the kind of magical realism that could have melted off the pages of García Márquez. As part of Phaidon's Contemporary Artists series, *Peter Doig* (\$39.95) provides a comprehensive look at the artist's oeuvre, from the thick and dappled paintings of the late eighties to the airy pastel washes of the mid-nineties to motifs—à la Gauguin or Rothko—that reflect the lush surroundings of his current home in Trinidad.

Influenced by Canada's Group of Seven, Doig's virtuosic work is a departure from the slick art that defined the eighties power-suit Zeitgeist (though last fall, the Saatchi Gallery in London reportedly sold seven Doig paintings to Sotheby's for a cool \$11 million). Instead, Doig presents visions of melancholic simplicity mired in both fantasy and gloom—the ski slopes of mid-Canada, a humble cabin tucked behind trees. Though the scene is often surreal, there is always a human element to lend bearing, be it a boat, a stretch of highway, or, for fun, the occasional pop-culture reference, including the bearded burnout-looking dude in *100 Years Ago* (2000?2) taken from the cover of an Allman Brothers record.

Every Thursday, Doig turns his tropical workspace into something he calls the Studiofilmclub, a venue that brings cinema to the locals of Port of Spain and inspires Doig to paint movie posters for screenings. (These recent works are now touring European museums and galleries.) Throughout the book, there is a cinematic aspect to both the look and subject matter of these paintings, eerily projected onto dreamlike surfaces: The snow flurry of *Milky Way* (1989-90) could be falling stars; the dripping palm tree of *Grande Riviere* (2001-2) could be Doig's paint still waiting to dry. —
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Men's Vogue, 2007