

## reviews: new york

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### Peter Doig

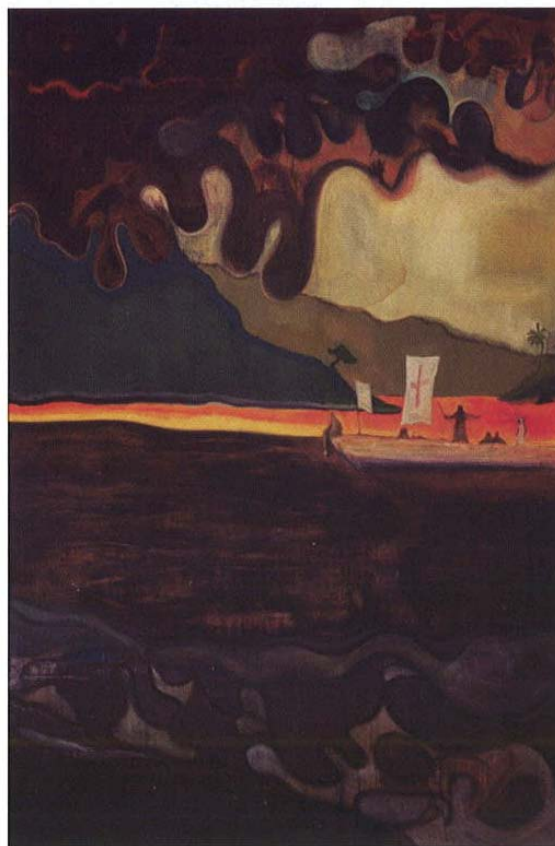
Michael Werner Gallery

Gavin Brown's Enterprise

Peter Doig, who hadn't had a show of his paintings in New York since 1999, returned in triumph with this two-gallery spread. He has been referred to as "a latter-day Turner," "a blissed-out Munch," and a "Vuillard on acid," and likened to Chardin and Bonnard, as well as to Gerhard Richter, Luc Tuymans, and Elizabeth Peyton. His mute and moody paintings have been described as banal and decorative "in a sickly way." They can be loose and lyrical, or gauche and grotesque. When they're good they are almost sublime. When they miss, they are horrid.

The show at Werner featured two huge inarticulate canvases of a skinny apparition dressed as a bat, plus several small landscapes, which transpose Doig's iconic canoe from northern Ontario to equatorial climes. One of the landscapes appeared to have a small seagull (or perhaps Icarus) floating in the sky.

But the show at Gavin Brown's was a real stunner. The painting *Music of the Future* (2002-7) could be called a Caribbean *Sunday in the Park with George* – all blue-green algae, tiny figures, and anecdotal painterly incident. *Maracas* (2002-8) turns three stacked loudspeakers into objects of abstract mystery. A Ping-Pong painting sets a lone player with a red paddle against a checkered black and blue wall, the table's side pressing against the picture plane, and *Moruga* (2002-8) insinuates mystifying pageantry into a lakeside scene. Painted from film stills and photographs in a process akin to a DJ's sampling, Doig's trancelike images – perceptually mysterious as well as perpetually puzzling – function as half-forgotten memories from our overloaded image banks.



Peter Doig, *Moruga*, 2002-8, oil on canvas, 118" x 78 3/4".  
Gavin Brown's enterprise.

- Kim Levin