

Extract from:
ART REVIEW
London
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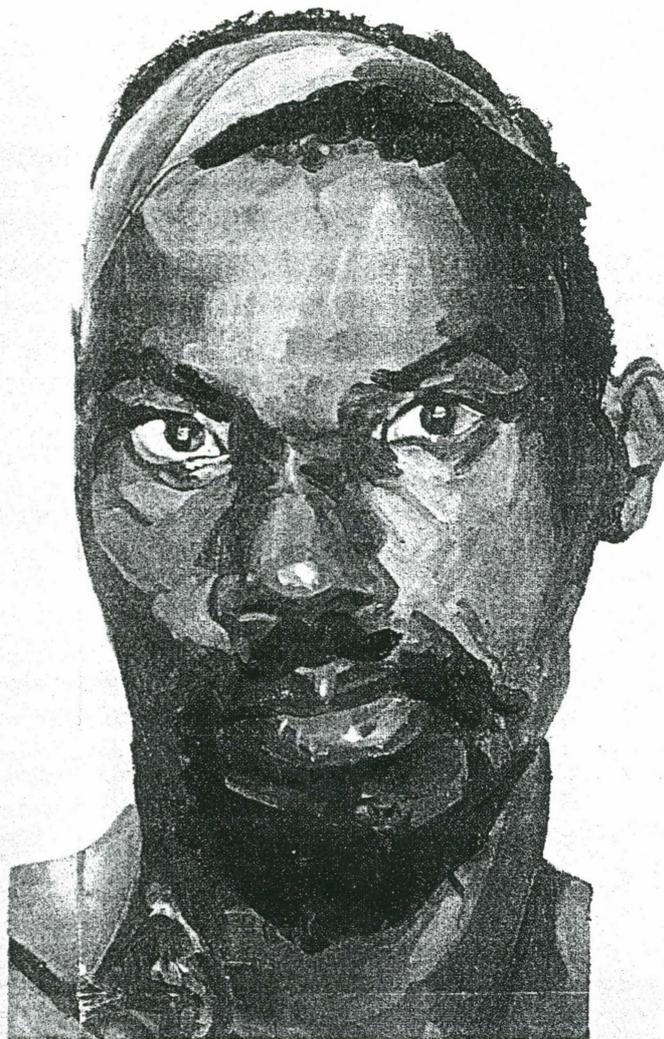
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sight. Terry Winters, *Set Diagram/42*, 1998-
oil on linen

Winters do not come much more difficult than Terry Winters. So when you come to a conceptual painter like Winters, the Dutch architect and theorist Rem Koolhaas, an enticing, confusing combination. White Cube's current show is an updated version of a previous collaboration between Koolhaas and the American painter at the New York gallery Lehman Maule, where 60 paintings were first displayed on plywood wall-coverings, combining the painted, built and montage elements of Russian Constructivists such as the Proun rooms of El Lissitzky. The original show came out of a conversation between Winters and Koolhaas about how best to exhibit a large number of works to create a single new piece. Although the series has been cut to 15 abstract lattice paintings for the London show, Winters's singular language of painting is enough to get your teeth into without the intervention of Koolhaas. For a long time Winters was not exhibited in the UK precisely because his work demands a heavy dose of interpretation. Some of his recent, web-like paintings are abstracted plants, amoebic cells, microscopic cells, flowers and tortoise shells, as in *Set Diagram/42* (above). The complex structure of paint can be either static cages or restlessly unstable surfaces, referencing the ancient lines of cave painting and the modern graphics of computer games, but his own terminology is even more rigorous than these assumptions of exactness might suggest. When combined with his self-proclaimed aims of painting "zones of emotional energy" or "collaborations with circumstance", does Winters really know what he is painting? It seems he is in control, but the ultimate decision is yours. **OW**

Winters, to 2 March, *White Cube*², 48
Cork Street, London N1 (020 7930 5373)



FACE FACTS

Veracity isn't always a quality much admired in portrait painters, and Mark Gilbert admits he's had his fair share of dissatisfied customers. But when it came to documenting the work of Saving Faces, a charity for research into the prevention and treatment of oral and facial injuries and diseases, there was more than the sitters' vanity at stake. During his residency at St Bartholomew's and the Royal London Hospital, Gilbert painted patients before, after, and even during facial surgery, charting the physical and emotional changes they experienced.

Although these starkly realistic portraits are inevitably disconcerting, even repellent, Gilbert's intention was not to create some sort of Victorian sideshow of freakish unfortunates. His subjects are presented without sensationalism or distortion – with such success that several of the patients carry their portraits with them to explain their experience to others. Rather than being coldly clinical, Gilbert's eye alights on the flashes of personality and pride in these faces. Thirty portraits will be displayed at the National Portrait Gallery this month as part of a nationwide tour.

At the same time, Beaux Arts in Cork Street are showing Gilbert's more recent "Fresh Faces".

Like the hospital portraits, these hugely expressive, close-up paintings treat the imperfections of each sitter with both candour and affection. **CE**

"Saving Faces: Portraits by Mark Gilbert", 27 Feb-21 April, *National Portrait Gallery*, London WC2 (020 7306 0055); *"Fresh Faces"*, 13 Feb-9 March, *Beaux Arts*, W1 (020 7437 5799)



Under the knife. Top: *Hakim (post-operation)*, 1999. Above: *Hakim (pre-operation)*, 1999. Both oil on canvas