

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Mike Bouchet's movie posters expose psychological manipulation...

ART & CULTURE

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You're probably too smart to be manipulated into seeing a film by the design of its poster, right? Well that may be true, but a surprising amount of behavioural science goes into those ubiquitous bus shelter billboards, so chances are it's working away on some level.

Psychological manipulation and mass-media control are the disturbing concepts underpinning Mike Bouchet's *Power Lunch*, which starts by considering Gregory Bateson's 1950s "double-bind" theory of coercion, in which a subject may be guided towards a desired action by presenting them with other worse paradoxical alternatives, and follows it through to today's movie posters.

Bouchet's seemingly photo-realistic paintings are composed of sections from actual posters that have been used by the studios to promote their new releases. Juxtaposing tightly-ordered blocks and strips of imagery of conflicting subject matter and genre, the American artist removes the overall context of each film poster but leaves the psychological impact intact. His practice has an added layer of conflict; Bouchet outsourced production to professional painting companies in the Far East, creating a tension between the works as unique hand-painted canvases and as mass production items. The *Power Lunch* series is being shown at **Peres Projects**, Berlin, from 18 September to 1 November.

[@PeresProjects](#)

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