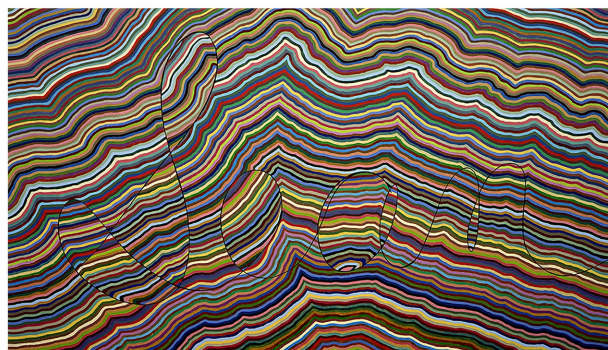


Sean Landers

Greengrassi, London

Sean Landers made an impact at Saatchi's a few years ago with his huge paintings filled with closely-written words in which Sean bared his sensitive soul, tongue in cheek. At Greengrassi, the first thing you come across is Sean's voice "I strive for greatness ... I love myself for it," talking over Holst's stirring "Jupiter" from *The Planets*. As he goes on about what a true genius he is, you're faced with a couple of large paintings full of multi-coloured lines, one with the word "Sean" written boldly across it in script. The facing picture has a more subtle and abstract motif, but it's difficult



Lines of identity: Sean Landers' 'Sean,' 2000

to investigate these qualities with the artist constantly declaiming his talent in your ear: "I mean every word."

The soundtrack is piped upstairs too, where the pair of facing paintings are an approximate copy of a particular Picasso painting, and a

pastiche of the latter's cubist period, with New York references thrown in. Both feature a seated male. In this room it's difficult to say who is the greater genius, Landers or Picasso. "Thank God for me," says Sean, and that seems to settle the issue.

In the gallery office is a third pair of paintings: figurative, with lots of writing in the background. The usual combination of Landers' self-righteousness, self-pity, and with an edge of the genuinely confessional. Its uncomfortable reading, partly because of the omnipresent verbals, partly because it's a working office, but also because of the often intimate disclosures.

Many of us take ourselves too seriously in these egotistical times. Sean Landers takes himself more seriously than most, but has the humility to mock himself from one end of the gallery to the other.

Sean Landers: Greengrassi, W1 (020 7388 3555), to 31 July
REVIEWS BY DUNCAN McLAREN