

Artspace

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7 of the Most Absorbing Artworks at Art Los Angeles Contemporary

By Andrew M. Goldstein

Jan. 31, 2015



PETER STICHBURY

Tracy Williams, LTD.

\$28,000 apiece

The New Zealand artist Peter Stichbury revels in the crossroads where portraiture meets the occult, and his portraits of women who have claimed to have had close encounters of the third kind possess an eerie, gripping power. Set down in flat oil in a manner that recalls early Lucian Freud, these paintings (of Barbara Robbins on the left and Mona Stafford, an abductee, on the right) are just off enough with their wide, askew almond eyes and catatonic affect to convince the viewer that a gulf of experience lies between them and the subjects. Previously shown in a solo show at the gallery in November, works from Stichbury's appealingly paranoid series are bound this year for a group show of alien-inspired paintings in Spain, where a talk will be delivered by the Bobby Fischer of Ufology, Jacques Vallée.