

LAWEEKLY

The Gospel According to...



Thomas Lawson, *Untitled* (2006)

MUSTSEEART

BY AMRA BROOKS

Thomas Lawson's "History/Painting" at LAXArt

The dual role of artist and critic has always seemed a curse — it must be somewhat paralyzing — yet CalArts dean Thomas Lawson (author of the famed 1981 essay "Last Exit: Painting") continues to both write and investigate painting. In this new body of work, he has painted large, subtly distorted maps that toy with our perception and play with the idea of meaning and representation. Here, blue no longer means water, and continents merge and drift to form entirely new lands. Shown along with the maps are smaller portraits in which some of the men are blindfolded. Together, a larger political narrative is implied, but somehow it continues to be as much about the politics of painting itself as it is about current events.

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