

MATTHEW BRANNON

HYENA

29 April – 6 June 2006

We are pleased to announce "HYENA", Matthew Brannon's second exhibition at our gallery.

Matthew Brannon (b. 1971) grew up surrounded by the death rock and punk scene of Los Angeles. Opportunities to simply and quickly produce advertising and informative material such as posters, postcards, flyers and fanzines were utilised in manifold ways in this subculture, and were a definitive influence on Brannon's artistic socialisation. He now lives in New York and works in both the high- and low-end production of prints and posters. His tapestries and prints are produced using classic printing processes, the nature of which is often contrary to the dreary images they create.

Brannon's elegance and formalism is contrasted by consistent eerie content. Thus the supposedly easy-to-consume surfaces are overturned by the use of sinister, sometimes surreal-seeming texts, as seen in the series of two-colour silkscreen prints in the exhibition. Stylish graphic depictions of plants hover above the titles "How it all ends", "Hair of the Dog", "Police Officer Giving up" and "Sick Whore".

Following the thematic guidelines of "Penetration" (Brannon's last show at Jan Winkelmann / Berlin) "Hyena" extends his focus on the issue of the frailty and vulnerability of the human psyche. The constant and more or less present fears that sometimes allow a glimpse into the deepest of human abysses. Often these lead to what the artist calls "personal pathologies", i.e. substance abuse, alcoholism, sexual misadventure, careerism and megalomania. Best seen in the two new letterpress pieces, which balance between prose and poetry.

In addition to the already mentioned print series, two new large-format tapestries will be displayed. The oversized, almost iconic eels echo both graphically and conceptually the image of a whip.

At the centre of the "Hyena" exhibition is the piece of the same name. Composed of a phonograph record of a hyena barking and the drawing of a whip it is as atmospheric as it is absurd. The noises made by the restless, rambling, caged and panting animal mingle with the clanging of gates and audience chatter. The harsh maniacal and hysterical "laughter" leads into the cracking sound of breaking bones.

The exhibition poster by Carol Bove is the latest in a series of posters designed by artist friends of Matthew Brannon for his exhibitions (previous posters were done by: Liam Gillick, Wade Guyton, Patrick Hill, Sarah Morris and Richard Phillips).

Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 11 am to 6 pm.