

**MATTHEW BRANNON
PENETRATION**

05.03. – 16.04.05

Opening: Sat, 05.03.05, 7 – 10 pm

With "Penetration" we are pleased to announce the first solo exhibition by Matthew Brannon in Berlin.

The works of the artist, born in 1971 and living in New York, are often characterised by dark humour and provocative ambiguities. The title of the exhibition itself is misleading to visitors. The word "Penetration" has sexual connotations which are however not fulfilled in the exhibition. On the contrary "Penetration", aside from its other common meanings, especially in English (e.g. decisiveness, deep action, comprehension) refers to Brannon's interest in Sigmund Freud's writings and his preoccupation with personal pathologies.

Matthew Brannon's works are distinguished primarily by the use of peripheral media from advertising or informative material, such as posters, film trailers, advertisements, signs, etc. Although consisting of typical graphic and structural elements, they are nevertheless supplied with absurd and in part nonsensical content. Thus, in the latest series of silk-screen prints of fictional haunted-house-movie-posters presented in the exhibition, the credits show details such as "Starring: Smells of Death, Gray Wolves Sipping Chianti, Gruesome Guests ..." or "Produced by: Fans of Fakes and Fans of Filth, Credibility Gains, Confidence Lost..." In this way the sense and function of the credits become confused, or are replaced by the artist's own surreal poetry.

The wall hangings produced since 2002, embroidered and painted with metallic colours, were initially conceived as possible backdrops for his fictional haunted-house-movies. Since then they have developed their own formal language. Shifting loosely between painting and decor, they cite elements of nature such as flying birds and tree branches moving in the wind. They are reminiscent of late eighteenth century chinoiserie wallpaper, but can also be seen as a form of "domesticated" nature "degenerated" into decoration.

The graphics printed in a limited number by letterpress function in a similar way. Here floral motifs in outline are combined with silhouette-type shadow images of knives. A subliminal psycho-pathological interpretation suggests itself both here and in the central wall work of the exhibition. Several enormously enlarged black knives appear to fly in front of the wall in various perspectives, like a mobile. The choice of the ordinary kitchen knife as a motif has its foundation in its popular cultural connotations. As a household object misused as a weapon it usually stands for spontaneous and impulsively committed acts. The knife as the archetypal weapon also functions in an opposite fashion: as a means of defence. Against the background of Matthew Brannon's already mentioned interest in psychoanalysis, the knives – which for Freud are symbols of penetration fears – can be interpreted in a transferred sense as a threat from the inner turmoil of our most hidden yearnings and secrets.

The exhibition poster by Liam Gillick is one of a series of posters designed by artist friends of Matthew Brannon for his exhibitions.

Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday 11 am – 6 pm