

JOHANNES WOHNSEIFER
EMPTINESS, VIOLENCE & VALLEYS
14 November - 23 December 2009

Praz-Delavallade is proud to announce the first solo exhibition by Cologne-based artist Johannes Wohnseifer (* 1967). Wohnseifer will take over both gallery spaces to exhibit a new series of paintings, sculptures and paperworks.

"Emptiness, Violence & Valleys" functions like a sequel to a museum presentation at the Sprengel Museum, Hannover in 2003 and at Casey Kaplan Gallery, New York in 2008. Both previous shows dealt with the representation of power, void and history culminating in a series of environments featuring a diversity of works, materials and media.

The exhibition begin with four new large scale paintings which are actually combinations of a wallpainting behind perforated and powdercoated aluminium paintings. All works Untitled, (Sea, Forest, Desert and Sunset) could be perceived as colourful abstractions as textiles paintings by Blinky Palermo, while referring through the title to the idea of landscape painting.

In the second room, the eponymous series Emptiness & Violence III consists of seven found portrait paintings made in Germany between the years 1933 and 1945. Each banal painting was made by an amateur or unknown artist during that time and form a constellation of characters as an imaginary family portrait. Installed chronologically under yellow-filtering Plexiglas, the works form a scenic panorama of Nazi Germany and are a sequel of a series of landscape painting from that period shown in 2008.

A series of five new sculptures which refer to landscape as much as void or economic models are also presented. Basically these are very usual looking white painted empty pedestals, but if you look closer you'll see that the pedestals are all ending in a topographic model of a valley. The romantic idea of a valley landscape has changed a lot in past times when the valley was more and more used as metaphor for an economic decline.

A series of drawings, photographs and collages correspond with the show's topics will be presented in the second space of the gallery rue Duchefdelaville.

By combining worlds of fact and fiction, precise references and oblique allusions, Wohnseifer highlights the contextual significance inherent in visual perception to create an installation where ideas and symbols quickly shift meaning and new relationships are formed.

Johannes Wohnseifer (*1967, Cologne) lives and works in Cologne and Erftstat. This year Wohnseifer had solo exhibitions at Johann König, Berlin and Galleri K, Oslo. In 2008, the galleries Gisela Capitain, Cologne, Casey Kaplan, New York and Galería Helga de Alvear, Madrid held solo exhibitions of the artist. In 2007 Wohnseifer's series "Kleenex Mathematics" was shown at the Presentation House Gallery in Vancouver. The exhibition "Vertrautes Terrain – Aktuelle Kunst in und über Deutschland" at the ZKM in Karlsruhe and the shows "The Porn Identity. Expeditionen in die Dunkelzone" at the Kunsthalle Vienna recently presented works of the artist. Currently, Wohnseifer's works can be seen at Compass in Hand: Selections from The Judith Rothschild Foundation Contemporary Drawings Collection" in the New York MoMA.

In an accompanying exhibition at Christophe Daviet-Thery, 10 rue Duchefdelaville the artist will present the complete collection of all his artist's books, catalogues and publications.