

MATTHEW BRANDT

More pictures from Wai'anae

November 19 – December 19, 2015

Praz-Delavallade & Vedovi are pleased to announce *More pictures from Wai'anae*, Matthew Brandt's first solo exhibition in Brussels. The show will exhibit a new series on the Hawaiian landscape that furthers Brandt's formal and material consideration of the natural world.

«For the past three years I have been taking photographs in Oahu. These printed photographs were rolled in dirt, leaves, burlap and lace and buried on a family farm in the town of Wai'anae. Over time, the elements of the Hawaiian earth changed these pictures. Presented in this exhibition are remains of this process.»

This new body of work extends Brandt's interest in the meeting between the photographic subject and its material self. Pressing beyond the pictorial depiction of the dense tropical rainforest, the images also bear the imprint of the actual site. In mixing with the soil, the picture surface erodes—areas are stripped of layers of emulsion, and new patterns are superimposed from the materials used to bury the prints.

A repeating palm tree motif has been hand-stenciled onto the gallery walls in a multi-color layering process. In essence, the artist combines handwork with a mechanical procedure to create a hand-printed wallpaper.

This wallpaper is another way of extending Brandt's exploration of the Hawaiian landscape into the space of the gallery in a lived way. Throughout history and across cultures and religions, palm trees and palm motifs have been symbols of peace, paradise, and hospitality — the marker of an oasis in a dry desert. Printing palm tree wallpaper is a site-specific solution for hanging an exhibition in an apartment-style gallery in Brussels. The space of home and hearth opened up a natural progression from printing clothing — worn and circulating within the walls of the gallery — to printing wallpaper as a way to engage with the complex modes and history of domesticating the «exotic» and rendering it decorative. In this way, the idea of a Hawaiian paradise has been supported by the flattened tropical imagery of tourist memorabilia, tchotchkes, postwar films, and other products. This palm tree motif wallpaper is a part of an investigation of domestic digestion of the Hawaiian landscape.

In 2015, Matthew Brandt's work was part of the exhibition Light, Paper, Process: Reinventing Photography, Getty Museum in Los Angeles. He also has been nominated for the 2015 Pictet Prize. His first solo museum exhibition, Matthew Brandt: Sticky/Dusty/Wet, took place in 2014 at the Columbus Museum of Art and has been exhibited at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art then. Equally in 2014, photographs from Brandt's Lakes and Reservoirs series were shown in a solo show at the SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah and in the International Center of Photography's group exhibition, What is a Photograph?. The artist's work is in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum, New York; J. Paul Getty Museum, LACMA, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Cincinnati Art Museum; Royal Danish Library, National Museum of Photography, Copenhagen; and the Columbus Museum of Art, among others. Brandt was born in California in 1982, received his BFA from The Cooper Union in New York and his MFA from UCLA. He currently lives and works in Los Angeles.