

Lonely long meaningless way home: Johannes Kahrs

18 November 2006 – 10 February 2007

Parasol unit foundation for contemporary art is pleased to present ***Lonely long meaningless way home: Johannes Kahrs***, the first solo exhibition of Kahrs' work in a UK institution. Having taken a quote from Franz Kafka, *Lonely long meaningless way home*, for the title of his exhibition Kahrs will show a series of paintings together with pastel and charcoal works on paper, both of which media are of equal significance to him.

Kahrs manipulates found imagery garnered from film stills, pictures from newspapers, and from personal photographs to depict human figures and their world in odd or unusual scenarios. Crucially, Kahrs liberates existing images from their original meaning and via an intense pursuit of detail he deftly re-establishes his initial fascination with the image. His experimentation with the original form of the image sidesteps hastily reductive interpretations and produces a sense of ambiguity.

The compelling ambiguity evoked in Kahrs' works is achieved through their characteristic dark and uncanny atmosphere. Kahrs' oeuvre is defined by a highly developed relationship to the contingencies of light and the contrast between light and dark. In his works on paper the shifting tones and gradations of grey and black pastel emphasize the most expressive and unresolved elements. Significantly, his paintings have no internal illumination, the lack of which amplifies the mood and tension he conveys through his mastery of thick dark paint. Along with the rigorous manipulations and subversive qualities present in the works, Kahrs further distances the viewer from the works by presenting them behind glass. The works with their glazed surfaces throwing back any light simultaneously hold the viewer in thrall.

Johannes Kahrs provokes his audience with paintings and drawings of dramatic scenes and imagery in which fact and fiction collide and reality is manipulated into an intricate world of concealment and mystery.

Lonely long meaningless way home: Johannes Kahrs is accompanied by a full-colour catalogue with essays by Ziba de Weck Ardan and Nicola Suthor.

Born in Bremen, Germany, in 1965 Johannes Kahrs now lives and works in Berlin.

During 2006, Kahrs has had work in group shows at Museu Serralves in Porto (PT), the Phoenix Art Museum (US), and Centre Pompidou, Paris (FR). Later this year he will participate in an exhibition at Bass Museum of Art, Miami (US). In 2004, Kahrs' work was included in a group exhibition entitled *Contre-Image* at Carré d'Art Nîmes (FR). In the same year, he was invited to present his work at the Manifesta 5, Biennale at San Sebastian (ES). In 2001, Kahrs had solo exhibitions at Kunstverein München (DE) which travelled to FRAC des Pays de la Loire in Carquefou (FR) and at S.M.A.K. in Ghent (BE). He has works in several major museum collections, including Centre Pompidou, Paris; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; Museum of Contemporary Art MoCA, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art MOMA, New York; and S.M.A.K., Ghent.

Opening hours: Tues–Sat, 10 am–6 pm. NEW: Sun 12–5 pm

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