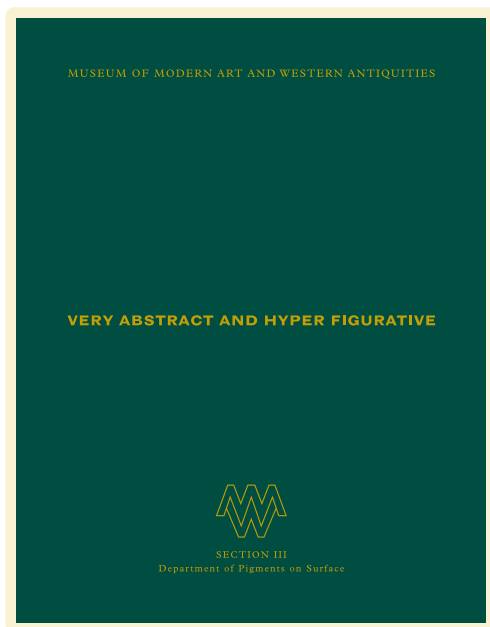


THOMAS DANE GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE



MUSEUM OF MODERN ART AND WESTERN ANTIQUITIES
Department of Pigments on Surface
Section III: VERY ABSTRACT AND HYPER FIGURATIVE

Curated by Jens Hoffmann
15 March – 14 April 2007

The Thomas Dane Gallery is pleased to present *Very Abstract and Hyper Figurative*, an exhibition curated by Jens Hoffmann. At first glance, the exhibition appears to be an overview of recent painting focusing on artists from Europe and North America. However, on closer inspection, the exhibition presents painting in quite a different light. By outwardly categorizing the paintings according to two contrasting styles, the show provokes a series of questions about art history, painting and value systems. The overall exhibition design plays with display ideas common to cultural history museums rather than galleries of contemporary art. The works of over forty artists are displayed within two large glass cabinets normally used to present artifacts: one dedicated to figurative painting and one to abstract works. This device creates the possibility for critical distance from and reflection on the practice of painting, which is presented as an artistic phenomenon from another era or cultural context.

Within the confines of this exhibition it is assumed that the long-proclaimed death of painting has in fact taken place and that the art works are artifacts, cultural products from a bygone era. By isolating the paintings in this way, there is an estrangement,

which paradoxically allows for a fresh investigation of the various aesthetic, economic, and critical systems, which are brought to bear on the evaluation of an artwork.

Very Abstract and Hyper Figurative sets out to reflect playfully upon the status and position of painting within the visual arts today and in particular its relationship to the art market. It also acknowledges the important contribution of each artist participating in the exhibition to the wider discourse on painting at this particular moment in time.

The title of the exhibition is a reference to Marcel Broodthaers' work *Museum of Modern Art – Department of Eagles* (1968 – 72), a fictional museum he founded to redefine the understanding of art, explore the possibilities of institutional critique and ultimately to undermine the restrictive definitions of the art of his time. Similar to Broodthaers' concept, this exhibition presents itself as one department of a fictional museum, the first in a series. Other departments will follow at a later date in further exhibitions elsewhere.

Artists in the exhibition: Markus Amm, Hurvin Anderson, Matthew Antezzo, Varda Caivano, Brian Calvin, Arabella Campbell, John Currin, Peter Doig, Kaye Donachie, Milena Dragicevic, Marlene Dumas, Slawomir Elsner, Bernard Frize, Ellen Gallagher, Wayne Gonzalez, Mark Grotjahn, Andrew Grassie, Wade Guyton, Eberhard Havekost, Lothar Hempel, Olaf Holzapfel, Sergej Jensen, Chantal Joffe, Chris Johanson, Jordan Kantor, Udomsak Krisanamis, Martin Kippenberger, Stefan Kürten, Sarah Morris, Frank Nitsche, Albert Oehlen, Christopher Orr, Laura Owens, Elisabeth Peyton, Michael Raedecker, Anselm Reyle, Clare Rojas, Wilhelm Sasnal, Maaïke Schoorel, Norbert Schwontkowski, Anj Smith, Dirk Stewen, Neal Tait, Phoebe Unwin, Dan Walsh, Jakub Julian Ziolkowski

Jens Hoffmann is a curator and writer based in San Francisco where he is the Director of the Wattis Institute of Contemporary Arts and a Senior Lecturer at the Curatorial Practice Program of the California College of the Arts.

Information

Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday 11am – 6pm, Saturday 11am – 4pm

For further enquiries please contact info@thomasdane.com

Nearest tubes: Green Park / Piccadilly Circus