

## BANKS VIOLETTE

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### **BANKS VIOLETTE**

SALZBURG VILLA KAST

24 Saturday - 19 Saturday

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We are pleased to announce our first extensive solo exhibition of the New York based artist Banks Violette. Born in 1973 in Ithaca (NY), Violette studied at Columbia University New York and at the School of Visual Arts in New York. Over the past three years, he has made a strong institutional presence which has made him internationally known in very short time: his participation in the renowned Whitney Biennial in New York (2004), the solo exhibition at Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, as well as his participation in major group exhibitions at Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst in Zurich, Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt, and Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam (all in 2006) are his most important stations.

With his glossy black sculptures that are often categorised as New Gothic, Banks Violette takes up the iconography of Heavy Metal, both at the formal-aesthetic and the context level. He exemplifies the symbolism of death and decay used in Black Metal subcultures, which oscillates between beauty and cruelty.

In Salzburg, Violette will show sculptures and installations made of metal, neon, varnish, and glass, created specifically for the rooms in Villa Kast. In one instance, one of the sculptures will aim at destroying itself by means of a kinetic interaction of its components throughout the duration of the exhibition. In another case, the parts of a sculpture are made of deep-frozen elements.

In the catalogue on the much-discussed exhibition USA Today at the London Royal Academy of Arts (2006), Norman Rosenthal writes: "[Banks Violette's] gothic installations are operatic analyses of the dark side of American culture. Violette's heavy-metal stylings become a mirror of the anxiety in youth culture, an adopted language compensating and empowering those who suffer sensations of immense sorrow and despair. [...] Violette's works convey this phenomenon of excess with minimal form. [...] Fuelled by its associations with violence, satanism, racism and nationalism, Violette uses the Goth genre as both symptom and cause of individual amorality and social breakdown."

This summer, Violette took part in the exhibitions The Shapes of Space at Guggenheim Museum, New York, and Bastard Creature at Palais de Tokyo, Paris. Kunsthall in Bergen dedicated a solo exhibition to him, also this summer. His works are included in many public collections: those of Migros Museum Zurich, MAMCO Geneva, MOCA Los Angeles, New York Guggenheim Museum, Museum of Modern Art New York, Whitney Museum New York, and the Saatchi Collection, just to mention a few.