

MARC BRANDENBURG

EXCERPTS

SALZBURG VILLA KAST

07 Apr 2007 - 19 May 2007



For the opening of our new ANNEX, we are delighted to invite one of the best-known young Berlin artists: Marc Brandenburg.

At first glance, Brandenburg's delicate pencil drawings, seem like negatives of snapshots from a bizarre parallel world. His photo-realistic scenes of demonstrators, flag-waving football fans, clowns, fairgrounds, portraits of friends and relatives, fountains and monumentally over-inflated Christmas decorations have an unsettlingly threatening effect. The silvery, shiny materiality of the graphite surfaces is combined with finely-nuanced, tapering contours. Everything is bathed in a blaze of unreal light. The motifs on the white paper appear deprived of their original peaceful character.

Brandenburg "examines in drawing the masks and symbols of a ruthless event culture: the ritual masquerading of football fans, the chubby bodies of fairground figures and mascots, the slogans and symbols on pennants, banners and hoardings" (Oliver Koerner von Gustorf). He draws from his own photos which attempt to freeze the moment of veering from one motif to another. What concerns him is the interval: "This is like a cut in film, or individual stills that make up a film. It's like trying to depict an aura," Brandenburg explained recently in an interview.

In his speech at the award of the 2005 Karl Ströher Prize to Marc Brandenburg in the Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, Ulf Poschardt remarked that although Brandenburg stands in the tradition of Pop and its delight in the surface itself, he still combines the aspects of realism and transfiguration in a contemporary manner. Poschardt also said that "it was not so much the media world and its images that Brandenburg captured, but moments of experienced intensity. A timid viewer (and aren't we all, when faced with delicate, intimate drawings?) has the feeling that he is looking at the negatives of snapshots of a deeply-felt life. The refined technical skill of Marc Brandenburg's work perpetuates the snapshot. The moment was given permanence. The shock of the moment has been lastingly sketched in." There is an evident affinity with the 19th-century genre and history painter Adolf von Menzel, whom Brandenburg greatly admires. Also Berlin Neue Sachlichkeit [new objectivity] painters such as Otto Dix and George Grosz can be seen as precursors of Brandenburg.

Born in Berlin in 1965, Brandenburg grew up in Texas and Germany. In the early 1990s he shot to fame with his forceful graphite drawings, and within a very short time he rose to the top league of the young German art scene. Now his works are included in collections such as that of MoMA New York, German Bank, Judith Rothschild Foundation, Berlin Copper Engraving Museum, Hamburg Kunsthalle, and Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, and exhibited in international museums. Our exhibition comprises 16 drawings, all from the past twelve months, presented in a room painted completely black and lit with black light.