



künstlerhaus bethanien gmbh : pressemitteilung

Berlin, 13th October 2008

Dear colleagues,

Künstlerhaus Bethanien presents:

TORBEN GIEHLER

Winner of the Falkenrot Prize 2008

Exhibition: 24th October – 16th November 2008
Wed. – Sun., 2 – 7 pm, Studio 1

Opening: Thursday, 23rd October 2008 as from 7 pm

With their strong, bright colours and grid-like pictorial structure, Torben Giehler's paintings and drawings automatically remind the viewer of digitally created realms like those familiar to him from computer games, flight simulators or CAD animations – images of hybrid spheres where virtuality and reality meet and permeate each other.

In more recent works, Giehler has rejected his earlier motifs' orientation on digitally generated models of urban landscapes and turned increasingly to abstraction, experimenting with apparently three-dimensional forms and areas of contrasting colour so that the images tend more and more towards the non-representational.

Finally, in his latest works, it is no longer possible to find any association at all with virtual landscapes or urban environments; the pictorial structure appears as a bold interlocking of cubic elements into abstract, usually large-format painting. Thereby, Giehler creates explicit references to prominent representatives of abstraction – mainly to Piet Mondrian, but also Blinky Palermo –, which he occasionally cites in his work titles as well and continues to develop in his own ingenious way over the course of time.

Even though Torben Giehler's paintings seem cool and virtual – as if they have been created artificially –, the process of image-creation does not take place at the computer, but always on

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the canvas as it hangs directly on the wall, and by hand. Sometimes Giehler photographs the evolving painting at interim stages, processes these photos on the computer, and then returns to the canvas armed with new ideas about form and colour gained from the reproduced image. The artist has developed a special mixing technique for paint and gel, which makes the colours so transparent that it is possible to see through several layers, as through coloured cellophane, for example. The use of fluorescing paints in bright colours also serves to intensify the pull that these audaciously balanced compositions of lines, areas and colours exert on the viewer.

To acknowledge the award of the Falkenrot-Prize 2008 to Torben Giehler, Künstlerhaus Bethanien is showing the first comprehensive exhibition in Germany, which offers a representative insight into Giehler's creative work to date.

Torben Giehler, born in Bad Oeynhausen in 1974, lives and works in New York. Initiated and endowed by international collectors, the Falkenrot-Prize is being presented for the fourth time in 2008. It is awarded to national and international artists whose work seems likely to set new standards in contemporary painting.

Our thanks are due to the collections Dubrow, Logan, Sonnabend, Vanmoerkerke and Wilks, to those lenders who wish to remain anonymous, and to Leo Koenig Inc., gallery Charlotte Moser, gallery Michael Schultz and gallery Suzanne Tarasiève, whose loans of work have made it possible to realise this exhibition.

Künstlerhaus Bethanien will be publishing a catalogue to accompany the exhibition, including an essay by Jens Asthoff (German/English) and many full-colour illustrations.

We are happy to provide further information and picture material on request.

Best regards
Künstlerhaus Bethanien