

DONALD MOFFETT

Fleisch

20 April – 19 May 2007
Preview Thursday 19 April 2007, 6-8pm

Stephen Friedman Gallery is pleased to present *Fleisch*, a solo exhibition featuring new paintings by American artist **Donald Moffett**.

Donald Moffett is known for his richly textured monochromatic paintings. In his work, Moffett often amalgamates the traditional medium of oil on canvas with sculptural elements and, more recently, video projections, while his topics explore social observations and political landmarks. For example, in previous work such as 'DC' (2004), Moffett projected specific video imagery onto densely painted canvases coated with aluminium paint. Some of these images were culled from the US capital's most notorious sites, such as the Watergate Hotel and the J Edgar Hoover FBI Building. Moffett was a founding member of the late 80s AIDS activist collective Gran Fury. Through the unlikely choice of abstract painting, Moffett continues to ruminate on death, desire, power and scandal.

Fleisch consists of a group of small canvases specially conceived for this exhibition. The faintly stained semi-coarse linen is punctured with holes or cut open and re-sealed with zippers, but is scarcely painted. Titanium white monochromatic fields and pure black circles evoke optical illusions of depth and three-dimensionality, while incisions in the canvas direct the viewer's eye to the space behind. Heavy black frames contribute to the contained, oppressive nature of these works. Exploring the legacy of minimalism and abstraction, Moffett twists formal traditions and interrogates the potential of his medium.

Fleisch (German for 'flesh' and 'meat') muses over the phenomenon of extreme sexual transgression, where desire seeps into violence and self-destruction. Moffett refers to both historic and literary episodes, such as the infamous 'Rotenburg Cannibal' Armin Meiwes, Georges Bataille's *Tears of Eros*, Muriel Spark's *The Driver's Seat* and the tales of The Brothers Grimm. Moffett responds to this subject matter by treating the canvas somewhat like skin that can be ceremonially pierced, sliced and sutured. Simultaneously obscuring and revealing the reverse of the canvas Moffett explores the potential behind the surface - the 'dark side'.

Donald Moffett's recent solo exhibitions include *Impeach and Hippie Shit*, Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, NY (2006, 2005); *Paintings from a Hole*, Anthony Meier Fine Arts, San Francisco, CA (2004); *D.C.* Stephen Friedman Gallery, London (2004) and *Donald Moffett: What Barbara Jordan Wore*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL (2002). His recent group exhibitions include *The Eighth Square: Gender, Life and Desire in Art since 1960*, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany (2006); *Around About Abstraction*, Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC (2005); *Hidden Histories*, The New Art Gallery Walsall, (2004); *Image Stream*, Wexner Centre for the Arts, Columbus, OH (2003) and *Site Specific*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL (2003).

Forthcoming exhibition: **Tara Donovan**, 6 June – 14 July 2007

Gallery hours are: Tuesday to Friday, 10am-6pm and Saturday 11am-5pm
For further details please contact Hanne Tonger-Erk on +44 20 7494 1434