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Jim Hodges

31 May - 19 July 2008

Stephen Friedman Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by American artist Jim Hodges.

Hodges uses a wide range of media to create complex and poetic works layered with meaning. Exploring universal themes such as life, death, nature, beauty and the passing of time, his work can be seen as a coming to terms with life and his own sense of self. Interlaced with deeply personal references yet communal in spirit, this form of self-portraiture evades the direct gaze of the viewer and invites many other readings.

In this exhibition Hodges works with camouflage print, a material he has used frequently in the past. Four works, each entitled 'end of time', are a conclusion of his investigation and play with this motif. Here, the four colours of the urban camouflage design have been cut out, regrouped according to colour and stitched together to create monochromatic fabric 'paintings'. This instantly recognizable pattern, a representation of nature used in warfare and hunting, has been transformed. Dismantled and reorganized, new visions of nature derived from the graphic pattern unfold. These sublime, densely layered landscapes suggest nature in its most abstract form, devoid of reality.

Hodges' fascination with nature is also evident in a new glass sculpture, 'ghost', produced with master glass fabricator, David Willis. As in Dürer's famous drawing, 'The Great Piece of Turf' (1503), nature has been meticulously depicted: flowers, twigs, insects, moss and decaying foliage are exquisitely rendered in hand-blown clear and coloured glass and contained within a large glass bell jar. Evoking objet d'arts and vitrines from the past which display scenes from natural history, this fragile material, pushed to its limit, holds life delicately in suspended animation. In this heightened state of distillation, the ordinary becomes extraordinary, revealing glimpses of multiple realities. Yet, free from sentiment, this tableau, with all the redolent symbolism of its individual parts, also reflects upon notions of pleasure and loss, beauty and the transience of life.

In 2009, Hodges' solo exhibition opens at the Centre Pompidou, Paris and will tour to the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, and Camden Arts Centre, London. Recent solo exhibitions include CRG Gallery, New York (2008); *Look and See*, Creative Time Commission at the Ritz Carlton Plaza, Battery Park, New York, NY, (2005); *Jim Hodges: This line to you*, Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea (CGAC), Santiago de Compostello, Spain (2005); Recent group exhibitions include *I Remember Heaven: Jim Hodges and Andy Warhol*, Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis, MO (2007), *Like Colour in Pictures*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO (2007) and *Universal Experience: Art, Life and the Tourist's Eye*, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, IL; touring to Hayward Gallery, London.

Stephen Friedman Gallery will be participating in Art 39 Basel, Hall 2.1, Stand D5 and at Art Unlimited with a presentation of Thomas Hirschhorn's 'Hotel Democracy' from 2-8 June 2008.

The gallery will be closed to the public in August and will reopen with an exhibition of new work by Kent Monkman, 12 September - 11 October 2008.

Gallery hours are: Tuesday to Friday, 10am-6pm and Saturday, 11am-5pm

[For further details please contact Charlotte Nourse on +44 \(0\)20 7494 1434](mailto:info@stephenfriedman.com)