

**PRESS RELEASE****Sebastian Hammwöhner***Affenstunde, the mimic*

29 May to 11 July 2009

Lullin + Ferrari are delighted to present new works by the German artist Sebastian Hammwöhner in his first exhibition in Zurich. Hammwöhner (b. 1974 in Frechen), studied from 1995 to 2001 at the Academy for Visual Arts in Karlsruhe, where he completed the master class of Prof. Helmut Dorner. He has won several awards, including a 2002 grant from the state Baden-Württemberg and a 2006 grant from the art foundation of Nordrhein-Westfalen. Hammwöhner has exhibited in numerous group shows, including the Berlin Biennale 2006, where he presented a collaborative work made with Dani Jakob and Gabriel Vormstein, – this piece was later exhibited at the Kunsthaus Glarus in 2007.

The enigmatic title and invitation card for this exhibition are appropriated from "Affenstunde", the first, 1970 released record of the German Krautrock band, "Popol Vuh", famous for their compositions using the legendary Moog III synthesizer, and a number of film soundtracks made for Werner Herzog. However, Popol Vuh is originally the name of a pivotal sacred book of post-classic Mayan culture, containing mythological narratives and a genealogy of the rulers of the Quiché kingdom of highland Guatemala.

Since 2006, Hammwöhner has created large pastel drawings on black paper depicting carpets. In earlier works from this series, the artist concentrated on motifs of the Arabian world and the Balkans. All his new works hanging in the middle room of the gallery focus on the cultures of the Maya and old Peru, drawing inspiration from rare textile museum pieces from South and Central America, precious works no longer on display for conservational reasons, but all housed in the Museum Rietberg in Zurich. Hammwöhner is intrigued by the aspect of this duplication of the works housed in the Museum Rietberg in Zurich, which lends to his exhibition the idea of a model – an imitation of an exhibition. On the one hand Hammwöhner is close to the ancient artworks by directly including certain motifs, on the other hand he alienates the source material by considerably changing the dimensions, the colour order, rhythm and composition. "Untitled (The Mimic)" and "Untitled (Wormhole Times)" were modelled from textiles made by the Paracas culture 1000 years before Christ.

The black surface suggests the "Black Square" by Kazimir Malevich. It simultaneously amplifies the luminance of the pastel technique, giving the aura of a sacred icon, its fragility protected behind glass. Several batons wrapped with coloured wool oscillate with the hues of the drawn carpets. Leant against the wall they set spatial and colourful marks. The colours of the batons are reminiscent of the Maya and Inka culture, but through their titles Hammwöhner gives them an ironical twist. The strict order of geometrical repetition lends to the images of the textiles a modernity, which situates them in the realm of minimal art. Hammwöhner creates a wonderful space, filled with chains of association and connections on different levels of meaning.

In some of the carpets one can distinguish creatures with huge eyes, which can be interpreted as apes or cats – animals worshiped as sacred in the culture of the Mayas and old Peru. Through the depiction of apes and the use of the title for the show Hammwöhner refers to an art historical topos: The artist as ape, who imitates nature. But Hammwöhner goes one step further, and sees in the figure of the ape also a critic of the art world, in which unreflected aping is a common behaviour. The imitation of reality is according to Hammwöhner, inherent to the motifs of the carpets. In this context the artist points to the famous flag paintings by Jasper Johns, in which the question "Is it a flag or is it a painting" is implicitly asked. The world is rendered as an illusion, and art as the mimicry of the illusion.

Open House Weekend before Art Basel: Saturday / Sunday, 6 and 7 June 2009, 11am to 5pm  
For further information and images please contact the gallery, Lullin + Ferrari, Limmatstrasse 214, CH-8005 Zürich, t. +41 (0)43 205 26 07, f. +41 (0)43 205 26 08, info@lullinferrari.com, www.lullinferrari.com.  
Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6 pm, Saturday 11 to 5 pm, and by appointment

**SEBASTIAN HAMMWÖHNER**

Born 1974 in Frechen, Germany, lives and works in Berlin.

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1995-2001 State Academy of Visual Arts, Karlsruhe

2001 Masterclass with Prof. Helmut Dorner

2002 Scholarship for graduates of the state Baden-Württemberg

2003 Kunstfonds e.v. Bonn

2006 Grant from the foundation for the arts, NRW

**Solo exhibitions**

2009 *Affenstunde, the mimic*, Lullin + Ferrari, Zurich

2006 *lumen naturae*, Meyer Riegger, Karlsruhe

2004 Supportico Lopez, Neapel

2003 *Ländicken, Ländicken, du bist ein Sändicken...*, Meyer Riegger, Karlsruhe

1999 *Lick off the blacking*, Montparnasse, Berlin

**Group exhibitions (selection)**

2009 *Magdalenenstrasse 1 // Hamburg*

*Berlin 2000*, PaceWildenstein, New York

2008 *James Ensor – Schrecken ohne Ende*, Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, D (Cat. through 8.2.09)

*Sebastian Hammwöhner at Dogtooth & Tessellate*, The Approach, London (through 1.2.2009)

*NACKT- UND ABGASFARBEN*, Galerie Kienzle & Gmeiner, Berlin

*Ohne Titel*, Montgomery, Berlin

*Nevertheless*, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin

*5000 Jahre Moderne Kunst*, Villa Merkel, Galerie der Stadt Esslingen

*Techne*, Galerie Michael Haas und Galerie Haas & Fuchs, Berlin, curated by Gustav Kluge (Cat.)

*Subconchicness*, Ballhaus Ost Berlin

2007 *Paul Thek. Werkschau im Kontext zeitgenössischer Kunst*, ZKM, Karlsruhe; Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg (2008)

*L'homme nu: Allures anthropomorphes*, Centre d'art Mira Phalaina / Maison Populaire, Montreuil, F

*School of flowers*, Kunsthau Glarus, CH (with Dani Jakob and Gabriel Vormstein)

2006 *Auch das Unnatürlichste ist die Natur*, Galerie Michael Neff, Frankfurt

*4<sup>th</sup> Berlin Biennial* (with Dani Jakob and Gabriel Vormstein) (Cat.)

2005 *Vilma Gold*, London (with Dani Jakob)

*William Blake and Sons*, Lewis Glucksman Gallery, Cork, IRL

*Colours and Trips*, Künstlerhaus Palais Thurn und Taxis, Bregenz, A (travelling exhibition) (Cat.)

2004 *Varda Caivano, Sebastian Hammwöhner, Silke Otto-Knapp, Alex Pollard, Hayley Tompkins*, Kerlin Gallery, Dublin

*Strategies of Desire*, Kunsthau Baselland, Basel, CH

*Atomkrieg*, Kunsthau Dresden, D (Cat.)

*Let the wind catch a rainbow on fire...*, Filiale, Basel, CH (with Dani Jakob and Gabriel Vormstein)

2003 *Actionbutton*, Neuerwerbungen der Sammlung zeitgenössischer Kunst der BRD, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; Russian Museum, St. Petersburg / RUS (2004)

*Painting on the roof*, Städtisches Museum Abteiberg Mönchengladbach, D (Cat.); Paolo Curti Gallery, Milan

2003 *There's no land but the land (up there is just a sea of possibilities)*, Meyer Riegger Galerie, Karlsruhe

*deutschemalereizweitausenddreie*, Kunstverein Frankfurt/Main (Cat.)

*Quetzalcoatl comes through*, Städtisches Museum Abteiberg Mönchengladbach (with Dani Jakob and Gabriel Vormstein)

2002 *Event horizon*, Lothringer 13, Munich (with Dani Jakob and Gabriel Vormstein)

*Pleasing thoughts*, griedervonputtkamer, Berlin (curated by April Lamm)

2001 *Kunststudenten stellen aus*, Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn, D (Cat.)

*Circles 05°: Berlin - Montana Sacra*, ZKM, Karlsruhe, D

*Der Wegelagerer*, Meyer Riegger Galerie, Karlsruhe (with Dani Jakob, Uwe Henneken and Gabriel Vormstein)

*Viva November*, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg, D (Cat.)

2000 *Moon white future*, Hobbypop Museum, Düsseldorf, D

*Sympathie*, Montparnasse, Berlin, D