

## MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY

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### **Hannah van Bart**

March 31 - April 30, 2011

Opening reception: March 31, 2011 6 – 8pm

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to announce its third solo exhibition of work by Dutch artist Hannah van Bart.

Hannah van Bart here presents a series of new paintings and drawings which continues her exploration between interior and exterior life. Further developing a formal vocabulary through the means of portraiture, van Bart for the first time creates her figures using found imagery as a point of departure rather than working from memory. In this new body of work, the artist's idiosyncratic use of color, patterning and background composition all coalesce to impart the psychological landscape of each subject.

From the photographic sources that van Bart draws inspiration, a singular characteristic or unique feature pulls forth and the artist then begins transmitting an ulterior experience upon her anonymous figures. Van Bart transforms the existent imagery and abandons any sense of narrative in her depicted "sitters." Rather, central to the artist's practice is her ability to impose a projected imagination upon each subject, concentrating on the depiction of a mood, of a presence, rather than merely illustrating the figure. The psychological impact achieved in these paintings is reminiscent of Alice Neel's honest and emotionally intense presentation of her subjects. The unnerving nature of van Bart's figures is further underscored by a shift in palette for the artist from the more muted tones of her previous work, where saturated greens and pinks now serve to intensify effect.

Using frontal views of standing or sitting figures for her compositions in the lineage of Dutch Old Master portraiture, van Bart isolates her subjects to pursue their 'inner stories,' as the artist denotes them. This sort of interior sense of self simultaneously expands into the enveloping space of the subject's background, situating the individual in their own private world. In van Bart's paintings, the role of the surrounding environment is equally weighted to that of the figure located within it. Her handling of the background of each work is one of layering, and subsequent removal and exposure, whereby the setting is flattened and lacks an ultimate specificity in disclosing any readily identifiable location. For van Bart, this is the moment, where figure and the surrounding silent world coexist in equal measure, in which the painting has become form. This existence is narrative enough.

Pointing to an excerpt from Martin Heidegger's *Building, Dwelling, Thinking* from 1971; "A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something *begins its presencing*," van Bart notes her interest in showing where and how the presence of the painting starts. While her figures stand or sit still, there is a floating together of mind, of the inward turn and of the surrounding that all conflates. And yet an awareness of the confinement and boundaries of the body is still palpable in their presence.

Hannah van Bart was born in 1963 in the Netherlands, and lives and works in Amsterdam. She will have a solo exhibition at the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague in 2013; previous museum exhibitions include a solo show at the CoBrA Museum and a group show at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.

Marianne Boesky Gallery is located at 509 West 24<sup>th</sup> Street, between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Our hours are Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 6pm. For further information or images, please contact Annie Rana at 212.680.9889 or [annie@marianneboeskygallery.com](mailto:annie@marianneboeskygallery.com).

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