

MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY

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Hans Op de Beeck: *Silent Movie*

May 8 – July 16, 2010

Opening reception: May 8, 2010, 6 – 8pm

The first solo show of the Belgian multi-disciplinary artist Hans Op de Beeck at Marianne Boesky gallery consists of a new body of works, including an installation like adaptation of the gallery space, two sculptural pieces, and a series of large black and white watercolor paintings.

Thematically the entire exhibition focuses on depopulated spaces at night, and the melancholic and alienating mood that staged, composed or constructed surroundings often convey. Contrary to what the title suggests, the show does not include a film, but offers the viewer a collection of static images that might evoke film like moods or narratives.

With simple means, the white cube gallery space is transformed into a silent interior, discreetly referring to traditional museum spaces and intimate print rooms. Because of the absence of color, this environment refers to old black and white film as well, which accentuates the representational aspect of it.

The watercolor paintings depict nocturnal outdoor scenes and *medium shots* and *close-ups* of fictitious home and museum like surroundings. The play with artificial light and light reflections plays a crucial role throughout this series. Some of the paintings are clearly cinematic, though the composition and framing of the images rather refer to old painting. Departing from his experiences of his recent solo show at the *Galleria Borghese* museum in Rome, Op de Beeck has conceived a love for the frontal composition of a painting, which was typical for the Renaissance era. Frontality also refers to the theatre condition and the staged, directing of the spectator's view; an interest that is present throughout the artist's oeuvre in general.

The sculptural piece, *A house by the sea*, was inspired by the isolated, detached family house as a cinematic archetype. In various film genres, the detached house plays the main character. It is the common thread through different story lines, the scene of a family drama or the silent witness of an ending family dynasty. Op de Beeck's sculpted house mixes conventional, traditional architectural styles with early modernism, suggesting it could have been built in the 1920's, somewhere in Western Europe. Examples of detached family houses both in European and American cinema, such as the now classic, threatening house in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*, or the almost surreal wooden house in *The Sacrifice* by Andrej Tarkovsky, at the end of the film in flames, also come to mind. Behind every facade of a house lies the story of one or several generations of inhabitants. The house is the setting of happiness, peace and banalities, but also of tragedy, turmoil and traumatic events.

In between the lines, this exhibition wants to talk about how we stage our surroundings, and how these surroundings become the inept scenery of both festive and tragic moments, of recurring home rituals or mental wandering. A deserted night scene can evoke both peacefulness and melancholia; it can be experienced as beautiful or uncomfortable, as banal or serious.

The absence of people in all the images offers the spectator the opportunity to project himself into the images as the only protagonist.

Marianne Boesky Gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10am to 6pm. For further information or images, please contact Adrian Turner at 212.680.9889 or adrian@marianneboeskygallery.com.

Hans Op de Beeck (Belgium, 1969) lives and works in Brussels, Belgium. His work covers a wide spectrum of media, including sculptural installations, sculptures, video works, animated films, text (short stories), paintings and drawings, photography, new media and stage design. Recent solo exhibitions and presentations of the artist include "In silent conversation with Correggio" (Galleria Borghese, Rome, I), "Staging Silence" (Galleria Continua, Beijing, CN) and "Location (6)" ("Holland Festival", Amsterdam, NL, and "Art Unlimited", Basel, CH). Recent group exhibitions include the "Singapore Biennial" (Singapore), "In-finitum" (Palazzo Fortuny, Venice, I) and the Kunst Film Biennale (Köln-Bonn, D). Upcoming are participations in the "Aichi Triennale" (Japan), "Terre Vulnerabili" (Hangar Bicocca, Milano, I), and "Prospect New Orleans International Contemporary Art Biennial" (New Orleans, US).