

For Immediate Release



Martin Eder: La Paix du Cul

May 23 – July 1, 2006

Opening reception:
Tuesday, May 23, 2006
6 – 8pm

“Martin Eder is not merely a painter, but a creator of environments.”

Travis Jeppesen. “Girls & Animals. The Case of Martin Eder,” in *BLATT: Bohemia's New Review of Lit, Art and Ideas*, January – February, 2006.

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to announce **Martin Eder: La Paix du Cul**, the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery, from May 23 – July 1, 2006. The opening will be followed later in the week by two performances by Martin Eder and his seven piece band, Richard Ruin et les Demoniques, at the Kitchen on May 25 and 26.

It is the paintings that have won the 37-year-old Berlin-based artist Martin Eder the widest audience, with their lush, velvety colors and faded elegance, a patently disturbing documentation of a dreamy Netherworld somewhere between domicile (or pornographic domesticity) and death. In these images, which always seem haunted by some unseen force, Eder subjects the psycho-pornography of every day life to a ruthless examination. Which is not to say his paintings are devoid of beauty; Eder's poetic instincts play far too great a role in ordering these melancholy states, which a more callous hand might smudge with less ambiguous emotions. Although the paintings are richly painted and romantic, presenting an idealized world, an underlying strain of violence and despair is also apparent.

In a series of watercolors, recently published in the monograph *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, Eder chose women and kittens as his subject matter. The women in the earlier paintings were taken directly from images found in pornographic magazines, while now Eder himself shoots the model from which he paints. While the paintings convey a disturbing voyeuristic gaze, what's even more jolting is the alchemical process of dislocation and transformation that's occurred. Eder has chosen from among the nastiest sources – cheap, mass-produced porn – and rendered the inherent ugliness into highly aesthetic images rich in color and emotion. Still, the one aspect of the source that is eerily preserved is the uncanny feeling that someone else is looking; in this sense, the paintings can never attain their desired state of purity, as their subjects have already been raped by another, exploitive gaze.

And yet these violent “tendencies” are tempered with images of fluffy kittens, puppies, and more recently bunnies – almost always domesticated animals, rather than more feral creatures, which might seem like a more obvious choice thematically. While the watercolors presented the viewer with single subjects, Eder's recent, large scale, canvas works bring the girls and animals, together into dreamy, haunted landscapes.

Some critics have posited that Eder's “rescued” girls and furry pets contain a veiled commentary on nature and artifice, particularly the human impulse to tame whatever nakedness and wildness surrounds us as a means of “controlling” our immediate environment – a form of control that is actually illusory. But any effort to extract literal meaning from these pictures is ultimately pointless, as Eder's main theme is the nature of perception itself.

Martin Eder was born in Augsburg, Germany, in 1968 and now lives and works in Berlin.

Martin Eder: La Paix du Cul will be on view at the Marianne Boesky Gallery at 535 West 22nd Street (between 10th and 11th Avenues) through July 1, 2006. Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Performances at the Kitchen, 512 West 19th Street, will be on May 25 and 26 at 8:30pm. Admission is \$10.

For further information or reproductions please contact Adrian Turner.