

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Max Schumann

November 19 - December 23, 2010

Opening Reception: November 19th, 2010, 6 to 8 pm

In the 1980s, when America's Cold War meddling was focused on stanching the crimson stain of Communism in Nicaragua, the Left 's party-line was, "U.S. out of Central America!" But one wiseacre raised the ante considerably, while nicely circling back to an earlier Native American sentiment: "U.S. out of North America!"

Max Schumann cut his teeth in that moment and on that end of the political spectrum, consorting with such critical culture brokers as Bread and Puppet Theater, Paper Tiger Television, The Cheap Art Collective and Printed Matter. It is from this fevered brow that he springs, but as these radical politics are a birthright and second nature there is also another generational layer steeped in critique and Deconstructionism-- -a cool detachment, a ready laugh, a sense of fatalism and an attraction to the knowing cynicism of Punk and the nihilistic gore/bodycount of heavy metal. Schumann's extensive knowledge of the machinations of global power structures breezes past the Logic of Late Capitalism and confronts the reality of Early Doom.

Iraq, Afghanistan, child deer hunters with their dead trophy fawns; weather channel graphics that mimic the extreme language and hysterical aesthetic of terrorist threat-levels; the cherubic, Fascistic, Social Realist, children of Ralph Lauren advertising campaigns; a seemingly endless avalanche of images, repeating, reiterated, re-scaled, writ large, miniaturized, muscle-memorized and understood through this art worker's diligent (un)mechanical reproduction.

It's as if the labor of painting were an act of self-flagellation, of punishment for his/our complicity in the crimes of our culture. And that's to say nothing of the No-Use-For-a-Style style of the paintings. Beautiful when necessary, moving when it's useful, generic and banal when reflecting such sources, the painting is always in service of the ideal; of exposing and making manifest the very purpose and use of images themselves. These are manipulative works about our complicity in our manipulation.

Installed on the wall in clusters and rows; stacked like cord-wood or bodies; piled in heaps the sheer numbers of Schumann's acrylic paintings on cardboard, presage some coming calamity. Or, one that he would say is already upon us.

About the artist

This is Max Schumann's fourth solo exhibition at Taxter & Spengemann. His last solo exhibition was at The Front Room, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, Mo. Previous solo exhibitions include *News Painting Project* at The Theater For The New City, New York, NY in 2007, Liste: The Young Artfair in Basel, Switzerland in June 2006 and at Taxter & Spengemann in 2007. His work has been included in group exhibitions at Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin; Kavi Gupta, Chicago; Red Saw Gallery, Newark amongst many others. Max Schumann lives and works in New York and is also the Associate Director of Printed Matter, Inc., New York, NY.