

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Matt Calderwood Hot Air

January 13th to February 10th 2007

Opening reception, Saturday January 13th from 6-8

London based artist Matt Calderwood has created five succinct and graceful videos for *Hot Air*, his second solo exhibition at Taxter & Spengemann. Presented in the widescreen aspect ratio usually reserved for epic films, the artist's tightly formulated compositions unfold in Hi-Definition—lushly textured and alive. Calderwood focuses on light in each piece. He has conducted a rather formal investigation into the most basic of photographic elements, by way of a reductive take on the classic Hollywood narrative arc: set-up, confrontation, resolution. The duration of each video is dictated by the natural conclusion of the set-up.

In *Polystyrene (front)* (all works 2006), we are given action painting as action movie, as a white and richly textured pointillist surface begins to writhe and swirl as if pixels had turned to liquid and we watch the titular Styrofoam disintegrate under the silent blast of a heat gun, looking more like snowflakes under a microscope than lowly packing material. *Polystyrene (back)* 2006, depicts the same process however back-lit, so rather than a bright white beginning we are shown a charcoal gray one (here the panel looks strikingly like gouache on paper). In *Matches*, a wall of tightly packed red-tipped matches bursts into flame ignited by an off-screen fuse that we hear in advance. The piece functions as an ultra-condensed disaster movie both in the obviousness of its narrative arc and in its destructive beauty. Less obvious however is the way in which the matches burn, coming to look like the Aurora Borealis lighting the sky above a lonely mountain range. This is another of Calderwood's fantastic moments inexplicably drawn from his predictable little scenarios.

In *Cuff*, a blazing full moon of a light bulb hangs in the center of an otherwise pitch-black screen. The shadowy artist moves in and wraps a blood pressure cuff around the bulb and walks off screen. Air is heard pumping through the cuff, constricting the bulb until it inevitably shatters the screen to black. A jet of air holds aloft another light bulb in *Lightbulb (screw)*. It holds afloat on the stream like an out of control idea—a tiny skydiver flipping and spinning on the wind until the air runs out and it crashes to the ground. The artist literally makes light dance.

All of these pieces take just a few seconds to resolve, with varying degrees of wonderment, anxiety and expectation packed into their short durations. Calderwood has adopted the tried and true tropes of big screen cinema for his small screen video works.

Calderwood has had solo exhibitions at Taxter & Spengemann in 2003, and in 2005 at David Risley Gallery, London. His group exhibitions include: *Risk & Allure*, Haus Für Kunst Uri, Altdorf, Switzerland, *Sounds Of Silence*, Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne, Germany both 2006; *Art Now Lightbox*, Tate Britain, London, UK, *Clarke & McDevitt Present*, The Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin, Ireland, both 2005; *Showcase*, South London Gallery, New Blood, The Saatchi Gallery, both 2004 in London, UK.