

MATTHEW BRANNON
“Cum Together”

October 5 – November 4, 2006
Opening Reception: Thursday, October 5, 6 – 8 pm

Friedrich Petzel Gallery is pleased to announce “Cum Together,” an exhibition of new work by Matthew Brannon. The show will feature 6 new tapestries, 7 new silk-screens, and 9 of Brannon’s signature letterpress prints which continue his use of printed matter to discuss the promotional and the pathological.

Matthew Brannon is known for his use of fine art and commercial printmaking alongside a classic sense of graphic design as a means of camouflaging his unpleasant and/or absurd content. This strategy is less a gimmick than an acceptance of the psychoanalytic model which believes that content is filtered before it is exposed. The balance of text and image in the letterpress prints provides the clearest example of this approach. One finds in them a word play dealing with career anxiety, alcoholism, insecurity, guilt, humiliation, sexual misadventure and so on, paired with bedside still-life images of lamps and statuettes. The consistent theme of success and failure here advances to a more literary like form both supporting and opposing the idea of the autobiographical. What Brannon began as mimicking the model of a film poster now operates on it’s own visual terms with each print acting simultaneously as chapter and setting.

The six silk-screened and embroidered tapestries provide a counterpoint that informs, supports and challenges the smaller works on paper. Inspiration is drawn from modern printed fabric designers such as Marimekko and Astrid Sampe. Brannon affirms the traditional use of hanging wall works to bring the natural into the domestic but prefers pessimism to optimism. While the swordfish tapestry continues Brannon’s more image-based explorations of the abuse of power and the exhausted end of wildlife. The bamboo patterns advance a new abstract direction, referencing interior design, architecture and fashion.

Displayed in the front gallery is a set of 6 silkscreen and foil stamped prints loosely depicting gold records. The suite is a grotesque and desperate display of achievement like one would find on the office wall of a Hollywood record executive. Each print bears it’s own title on it’s sleeve - humorously suggesting a hit song.

The title of the exhibition as well hinders a single interpretation. Beyond the musical reference and immediate obscene sexual image the title can be read as mocking the impulse to agree and lamenting the current political climate of conflict.

Brannon has been exhibited in both the United States and internationally. He is featured in ‘Uncertain States of America,’ currently on view at Serpentine Gallery, London. He has upcoming shows at York University Toronto, and the Whitney Altria, New York in winter 2007.

Matthew Brannon was born in 1971 in St. Maries, Idaho. He received his BA from UCLA, and his MFA from Columbia University, New York. The artist currently lives and works in New York City.

This will be Matthew Brannon’s first solo exhibition with Friedrich Petzel Gallery. The exhibition will open on Thursday, October 5, with a reception from 6-8 p.m. and will be on view through November 4. Friedrich Petzel Gallery is located at 535 West 22nd Street, New York, NY 10011. For more information, please contact the gallery at 212-680-9467 or info@petzel.com.