

press release

DIRK STEWEN

8 October — 14 November 2010

private view: Friday 8th October 6.30 – 8.30 pm

Maureen Paley is pleased to present the first solo presentation of Dirk Stewen's work in the United Kingdom.

The work exhibited will feature his dominant artistic strategies: large ink-and-thread pieces, horizontal assemblages of his photographs in various forms combined with an array of material from his archive, and watercolours.

The large works shown consist of four or nine sheets of photographic paper, each dyed with several layers of Indian ink, strewn with patterns of confetti and thread applied with a sewing machine, then joined together to form large rectangular panels. Stewen uses these pieces to establish a kind of punctuation within the flow of an exhibition.

The seemingly weightless counterpart to these works are combinations of works on paper (in the broadest sense), photographs (unique baryth prints, photocopies, industrial c-prints, inkjet prints) and sometimes smaller confetti pieces and wooden objects. Stewen compiles these pieces out of a collection that has been accumulated over the past decade: photographs taken by himself in and around Hamburg (and sometimes on his travels) are arranged with various other elements in order to form a state of democratic balance, of equilibrium: a sentence made of only equally beautiful words. As much as these structures are the result of controlled composition, they also display a delicate quality that appears almost unfinished. The watercolours sum up these various elements of Stewen's artistic vocabulary, they represent his basic principle: to keep his work in a constant state of becoming.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Exercises*, Kunstverein Overbeck Gesellschaft, Lübeck, 2009; *Paper Eye Collection*, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York, 2009; *Droplets*, Gerhardsen Gerner, Berlin, 2009; *The Exhibition Formerly Known as Passengers: Dirk Stewen*, CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco, 2008 (and previously, *Passengers*, 2007-2008, an ongoing group exhibition at the same venue); *Sugar, Lump Sugar*, Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, 2006. Group exhibitions include *Pale Carnage*, Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol, and Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, Scotland, 2007; and *Formalismus, Moderne Kunst, heute.*, Kunstverein in Hamburg, 2004 amongst others. Current group exhibitions include *Art on Paper 2010: The 41st Exhibition*, The Weatherspoon Art Museum, North Carolina and *Milk Drop Coronet*, Camera Austria, Kunsthau Graz.

Stewen was born Dortmund, Germany in 1972. He lives and works in Hamburg, where he graduated from Hochschule für Bildende Künste in 2001.

FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS:

MUNTEAN/ROSENBLUM
LARS LAUMANN project
19 November – 9 January 2011