

press release

DIRK STEWEN

19 July – 24 August 2014

private view: Saturday 19 July 6:30 – 8:30pm

Maureen Paley is pleased to present the second solo exhibition by Dirk Stewen at the gallery. This exhibition will focus mainly on his watercolours that are subtle, fragile and filled with muted colour.

'Dirk Stewen: When I saw your work for the first time I was instantly attracted to a specific use of colour. I fell in love with it. It's a certain kind of dirty and faded colour, because you use those aged materials. Part of my admiration for such use of colour is the murky unspecific space that it produces. To me these colours and the whole materiality of your work are a signal that I can directly enter into this extra space, a limbo. There is a small shift in colours – how could one describe it? It's like something is not ok.'

John Stezaker: One thing that I've always liked doing is to combine black and white with colour. That always excites me – when I have a field of black and white and only a tiny bit of colour. I was first attracted to that idea when looking at Jasper Johns' work.

DS: This colour between black and white and colour... I think that is a shared interest. It's very exciting.

JS: Maybe we could describe it as the colour of black and white. Because in your work you think you are looking at black and white but you are actually engaged with the most subtle of tones, the flesh tones... of aged paper, and those sparks of colour within the uniform blackness of the field in the confetti pieces. I have always been interested in finding that liminal connection, the point at which black and white turns into colour. And you are never sure at that point whether the colour is more real – sometimes you can read the colour as more real, the colour makes black and white seem artificial – but at other times somehow you feel the black and white is the real and the colour is the unreal. They interplay dialectically with one another in a kind of limbo. And it's also true in your work. However the threshold is in the boundary of those circles that are both openings and objects: an aperture and a fullness - like the fullness of the moon. And so they are objects of desire both as projective and recessive spaces.'

Pure Receiver, Dirk Stewen in conversation with John Stezaker, in Dirk Stewen – While you were out, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne, 2009

Dirk Stewen (b. 1972, Dortmund, Germany) lives and works in Hamburg, where he graduated from Hochschule für Bildende Künste in 2001.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Dirk Stewen at The Locker Plant*, Chinati Foundation, Marfa/Texas, 2013; *Exercises*, Kunstverein Overbeck Gesellschaft, Lübeck, 2009; *The Exhibition Formerly Known as Passengers 2.3: Dirk Stewen*, CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco, 2008; *Sugar Lump, Sugar*, Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, 2006.

Recent group shows include *Girls Can Tell*, Gesellschaft für aktuelle Kunst, Bremen, 2013; *Liebe ist kälter als das Kapital*, Kunsthaus Bregenz, 2013; *The Anxiety of Photography*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, 2011; *Art on Paper 2010: The 41st Exhibition*, Weatherspoon Art Museum of Greensboro, North Carolina, 2010; *Wir nennen es Hamburg*, Hamburg Kunstverein, Hamburg, 2008; *Pale carnage*, Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, 2007.

Stewen is the recipient of the 1st Prize in the 2014 Boesner Art Award. Recent residencies have included Villa Aurora, Los Angeles in 2013 and Chianti Foundation, Marfa, Texas in 2012. Solo publications include *While you were out*, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne, 2009 and *Night Exercises*, limited edition artist book, Printed Matter, New York, 2009.

For further information please contact Alessandra Olivi: alessandra@maureenpaley.com

The gallery is open from Wednesday to Sunday 11.00 am – 6.00 pm and by appointment.
Office opening hours are Monday – Friday 10:00am – 6:00pm