

Mathew Hale

WACHT SCHATZ

Opening April 30, 2010

Exhibition May 1 – June 5, 2010

Wentrup is pleased to present British artist Mathew Hale's third solo exhibition at the gallery during the gallery weekend 2010.

In his collages, projections, sculptures and installations, Hale conjures vital new images and constructions from fragments of material inherited from the past. Informed by the world and working through a process of associative improvisation, his work is both provocative and ruminative.

The process always starts without a concrete idea of what the end result will be like, very much in the spirit of the surrealist *écriture automatique*. His collages are the result of associations of ideas, shuffling of book pages, posters, magazines, newspapers, and photographs, the addition of drawn elements, or the spontaneous use of words and writing. He draws on materials with different dates, origins, and meanings. In an open play of form and content, fragments from the past and present, reality and fiction are combined into dream-like, alogical pictures, which are nonetheless informed by a structure of ideas. Documents, found pieces, and invented elements refer to different levels of reality: the private and public perspective on phenomena and events. By combining these opposites, Hale creates a kind of constructed memory.

A central work in the exhibition is the 3-channel slide projection "Die Münze" (app. 23 minutes). It is the expanded version of a work dating from 2009, which was on show at Art Basel as part of an installation specifically designed for the fair context, incorporating the event into the work's reception. After being part of his solo show at Wentrup this new slide-projection piece will be screened at the Museum of Modern Art, New York later this year.

The pictures of "Münze" loosely address themes from economics, politics and art and present West Berlin in the past and present – the city that is now the artist's living and working environment. This is where, several years ago, he acquired the painting "Lilo im Garten" (1963) by the now forgotten Berlin painter Walter Wellenstein (1898-1970) with the Deutsche Mark that was still the German currency at the time. The depicted "Lilo" is staged subtly in the course of the narration by repeated fade-ins as an ambivalent quasi-protagonist

WENTRUP

and projection surface for viewers. Hale adds other characters, events and locations by incorporating other picture material into the story. This combination of images leads viewers to move in thought from the individual story to the dimension of collective memory. At the same time, an opposite movement is triggered by explicit material or images known from the media whose integration into Hale's psychological image architecture triggers a re-reading and stimulates viewers to relate the observed to personal memory.

The visual dimension is supplemented by the spheres of language and history through a voice-over spoken by Astrid Proll. Proll was a founding member of the German Red Army Fraction (RAF) whose public perception in the media was profoundly shaped by the frequently published photographs of both her and the group's other protagonists. Proll now lives and works in Berlin as a photographer and picture editor. Her voice is introduced at the start as a poetic alias MIRIAM (which plays an important role in Hales' paper collages) and then engages in a cabal against the projected pictures with a text collage compiled by the artist.

Besides his upcoming screening at MoMA, NY Hale's work has been presented in group shows at the ICA, Serpentine Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery, London; the Biennals in Montréal and Venice and more recently at Fondation Ricard, Paris.

Tempelhofer Ufer 22
D-10963 Berlin
Tel. +49 (0) 30-48 49 36 00
Fax +49 (0) 30-48 49 36 01
mail@wentrupgallery.com
www.wentrupgallery.com