

Zurich, January 2004

PRESS RELEASE

Stefan Thiel

January 21st to February 26th 2005

Stefan Thiel, born in 1965 in Berlin, studied from 1988 to 1994 at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin and graduated as a master student of Professor Dieter Appelt. In 2004 he received a grant from the Künstlerhaus Schloss Balmoral, Bad Ems, Germany. The artist lives and works in Berlin.

Stefan Thiel appropriates the world of images through immense perseverance and obsessive hard work, having dedicated himself for the previous four years to the translation of de Sade's "120 Days of Sodom or The School of Excess" in braille. Researching the artistic possibilities and the consequences of processes of translation in the media, this work subversively combined braille, as a non-visual medium that only reveals its meaning through feeling, with the imaginary images of de Sade that appeal to the reader's voyeurism. After he had concerned himself with the literary pictures and with reflecting on the processes of their appropriation in the 'imageless' medium of braille, images, as Thiel said in an interview, had to come forth: everyday images, images of objects and people, small scenic events as well as details from landscapes and cityscapes are depicted in his large-format paper silhouettes, based on photographs. Without judging, they pass kaleidoscope-like before the viewer's eyes details from the reality of our own lives. It is in their reduction to the contrast between black and white determined by the silhouette technique that the cut-outs receive their conciseness. The precision of the technique and the modular format of the images lend Thiel's work an ornamental character that, however, through the size of the individual images is increased to the monumental. At the same time the restriction to the contour lines makes what is represented appear unfamiliar. Above all it is where the artist places breathtaking perspective views in the image that a play occurs between the surface and depth of the depiction that makes a single reading more difficult and opens up to the observer a space for reflexion.

The preview is on January 20th from 6 to 8 pm. Stefan Thiel will be in Zurich until Thursday January 27th. You are warmly invited to a personal interview with the artist during this time. We are also happy to send you relevant visual material on request.

We look forward to being able to welcome you to the gallery and thank you for your interest.

Mai 36 Galerie
Victor Gisler