

MAI 36 GALERIE

PRESS RELEASE

Zürich, November 2010

Stefan Thiel – *New Works*

Opening: **Thursday, 25 November 2010, 6 to 8 p.m.**
Exhibition: **26 November 2010 to 8 January 2011**
Opening hours: **Tue – Fri 11 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., Sat 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

We are pleased to announce the third solo exhibition, of new works by the Berlin-based artist Stefan Thiel (b.1965). Currently his work is also on view at the international group exhibition *Cut. Scherenschnitte 1970–2010* at the Hamburger Kunsthalle. (until 6 February 2011)

Stefan Thiel's interest in paper cut-outs is inspired by the complexity of this artistic device as well as its potential in such fields as performance, drawing, photography and decoration. The sources of his images are his own photographs as well as existing film material. The subject matter of the cut-outs and drawings, presented in the exhibition as an installation, draws largely on the artist's multifaceted repertoire of motifs. The exhibition might therefore be described as a kind of collaged remix, in which Thiel introduces variations on familiar motifs such as wire mesh, fishnet tights, paper streamers, spiderwebs and diamonds. These may be fragmented, placed in different contexts and executed in a variety of colours. The drawings are closely related to the paper cut-outs. Since they show the back of the silhouettes before they have been cut, Thiel considers them a preparatory stage. By drawing on black paper, he deliberately restricts his potential palette inasmuch as the choice of colour depends on its ability to assert itself against a black ground. In his own words, "This formal aspect follows the idea of composing a space of light in a black plane. Being in colour, the drawings stand in contrast to the black surfaces of the paper cut-outs that I've been making almost exclusively for the past 10 years."

The artistic conversion of the drawn line into one that is cut liberates the sculptural quality of the line. The light reflections remind us of its materiality. Like Henri Matisse's *gouaches découpées*, Thiel does not invent shapes; instead he carves specific shapes out of the various appearances of reality by reducing them to their essential lines. Every coloured line, whether drawn or cut, is like a ray of light to him that crops up in the sometimes unfinished, ornamental nets of the motifs. In this connection, the holes in the tights and the streamers may be interpreted as signifying a process of disintegration. The diverse medial qualities of the cut-out offer Stefan Thiel new ways of probing what Matisse has described as the truer, more essential character of beings and things that artists seek beyond their superficial existence in order to give to reality a more permanent interpretation. (See Jack Flam, *Matisse on Art*, University of California Press, 1995, p. 39) [Text: Oliver Zybok]

The preview is on Thursday, 25 November from 6 to 8 p.m. Stefan Thiel will be present.
For visuals, please contact: office@mai36.com.

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the gallery.

Mai 36 Galerie
Victor Gisler