

press information

July 2006

Mark Handforth

August 26 to October 14, 2006

Opening: Friday, August 25, 6 – 9 pm

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present its first solo exhibition of American artist Mark Handforth. In 2003, the Miami Beach resident was already represented in the gallery's group show *Breathing the water* with a sculpture titled *Jack Smith*. In Zurich, the artist definitely established his reputation with a solo exhibition dedicated to him at the Kunsthaus in 2005. At Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Handforth will be showing new works specially made for this exhibition. On view will be a monumental floor sculpture, several new wall works, and a sculpture hanging from the ceiling.

Mark Handforth is known for his adaptations of industrially manufactured signposts and urban 'furnishings' such as street lamps, tires, motorcycles, parking meters, public telephones or hydrants. He uses these artefacts that Ed Ruscha once termed "overlooked objects" by altering them, sometimes reproducing them partially, thus often keeping the viewer in the dark about whether they are ready-mades or not. Robert Venturi's slogan "Billboards are almost all right", mentioned in his study "Learning from Las Vegas", describes Handforth's starting point insofar as the artist takes things existing in the world as a basis, thereby recognizing their existence. These things are here, and they are here to stay. By transforming them, Handforth lets them find a new sense of poetry that carries the idea of vanity.

For instance, *Diamond Brite* (a contribution to the Whitney Biennial 2004) is a large, bent freeway sign that looks like an authentic road sign on the Interstate 95. Nevertheless, it is pure fiction – as a matter of fact, there is no such sign with an inscription saying "No Exit". In his art, Handforth always makes use of signs either stemming from or referring to everyday life. With a referential working method that draws its inspiration from popular images, the artist reaches the level of romanticism: a level that can be sublime and ordinary at the same time. This simultaneity of opposites is what Handforth is interested in and what he aims at.

With his sculptures, Handforth evokes an urban ambience. An integral part of his work is the negative space that the viewer intensely experiences between himself, the piece of art and the room.

When the artist compiles works for exhibitions, he speaks of creating landscapes. Entropy blends into memory: maybe this multiplying effect is one of the reasons why exhibitions by Mark Handforth are able to create such a strong presence.

Upcoming exhibitions by the same artist:

5 Milliards d'Années, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, September to December 2006 (group show)

The Uncertainty of Objects and Ideas: Recent Sculpture, Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, October 26, 2006 to January 7, 2007 (group show)

For further questions, please contact Markus Rischgasser at the gallery.

Opening hours: Tuesday – Friday 12 noon – 6 pm
Saturday 11 am – 5 pm

Next exhibition at the gallery: Eva Rothschild, October 21 – December 22, 2006
Opening: October 20, 2006