

# press information

April 2008

**Amy Granat**

**Chinacat Flowers**

April 26 to May 24, 2008

Opening: Friday, April 25, 6 - 8 pm

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present recent works by New York-based artist Amy Granat (\*1976) in a solo exhibition titled "Chinacat Flowers". The show comprises new 16 mm movies on DVD and photograms.

Since completing her art studies at Bard College, New York, Amy Granat has participated in exhibitions at venues such as the PSI, Long Island City and the Swiss Institute, New York. She was also represented at this year's Whitney Biennial. The artist mainly works with 16 mm films, photographs, and photograms, which often exert a mutual influence, for instance when film strips are copied on photo paper. The artist has chosen these media to reflect on classic movies and their picture carriers. Through the use of acid, and through techniques such as scratching, cutting up, and puncturing, selectively applied on the films, the material aspect becomes visible, adding a new dimension to the medium: not only at the moment of projection, but also - as is the case with the photograms - on the developed photo paper. The artist herself puts it as follows: "Whatever kind of assault you can make on film material, I've done it". The destructive element at once acquires a sense of sensuality typical of painting, for the resulting distortions and reflections generate novel pictorial shapes. The artist explains that for her, painting, especially that of abstract expressionism, plays an important associative part in both watching and creating such movies.

The play on the dichotomy between original and reproduction characteristic of Granat's work, and the associations resulting therefrom, give birth to a unique, dream-like reality that lends the pieces a timeless character. This is how the photogram, each of which being a unique specimen, undermines the idea of photographic reproduction. The absence of the camera and the method of directly copying objects on paper allow the objects to be presented on a one-to-one scale - a relation to reality that, on this level, cannot be achieved by photography.

Yet at the same time, the works appear more abstract than those of photography: reduced to their essence, such as light and shadow. Experiments with photograms took place as early as the mid-19th century, but it was not until the 1920s that this technique gained wide popularity among artists, ranging from Man Ray to members of the Bauhaus movement. This historical dimension can also be found in Amy Granat's photograms, as she uses fiber-based gelatin silver paper and which is highly durable.

The title of the exhibition is inspired by the lyrics of the Grateful Dead song "China Cat Sunflower". The group also wrote the soundtrack for Jud Yalkut's 1973 movie of the same name; underground filmmaker and video artist Yalkut, who has influenced Amy Granat's work, is considered one of the pioneers of experimental video art.

