

Press Information – September 10, 2009

## BERNHARD MARTIN | Dogma freier Raum

September 19 until October 24, 2009  
Opening Friday, September 18, 7–9 pm

**On Friday, September 18, 2009, from 7 to 9 pm, Galerie Thomas Schulte opens Dogma freier Raum with paintings from Bernhard Martin. The artist will be present at the opening.**

The works of Berlin artist, Bernhard Martin (born in Hannover, 1966) are thematically diverse, dynamic, turbulent, and often challenging in their aesthetic effect. They insinuate the pictorial visualization of an extensive stream of consciousness. His vast and carefully established style-repertoire omits any technical boundaries and allows him to simultaneously operate on the realms of image and reality. Martin consistently draws reference to the image as an actual image, playing with different means of expression through the reproduction of the drawing process.

While drawings and collages are the quickest and most immediate way for Martin to capture his real and fictional subjects, it is his paintings that collect his impressions, thoughts, and images into one humorous and enigmatic visual landscape. Though figurative, his visual vocabulary does not carry a recognizable trademark. Despite the work-titles, which are essential to him, his pieces often hold no identifiable narrative structure. Martin works to avoid what he calls the “realism-trap” and so an image of a person might be blurred, deformed or transparent. This alteration makes it a vague humanoid form that withdraws itself from the viewer’s perception, rather than being the centerpiece of his work. Martin’s goal hereby is to eradicate a sense of hierarchical painting and hide the origin of its inspiration.

After reviewing his work-ethics, the title chosen for his solo-exhibition at Galerie Thomas Schulte, Dogma freier Raum (dogma-free room), comes as no surprise; for the title itself denies any attempt to find underlying principles in Martin’s work. Conditions of human psyche, emotions, errors and hopes are as substantial to his work as drugs, sexuality and violence. The exhibition, concentrating on Martin’s painting, will include works such as *Dogma freier Raum* (2009), the headliner of the exhibition. The work itself appears spherically charged through the eradication of all references to time and space. Though the illusion of a clear perspective structure is given, the visual

space is merely being accentuated repeatedly. Much like the transparent figures in his paintings, the observer is sucked into a swirl of images; where different forces collide with one another.

In correlation to his thematic array of images, Martin does not commit himself to one specific style. Any direct comparison to artists such as Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Francis Bacon, Umberto Boccioni or Gerhard Richter should therefore be drawn carefully. More over they should be regarded as a sign of Martin’s style abundance, which is on one hand programmatic for him and on the other acts as a symbol of life’s ever-changing ways of perception. The flow and complexion of his recent works induce a variety of moods. Despite the partly retrospective appropriations in style and motif, that experience a cultural confrontation of fragments of contemporary styles, images, and everyday perceptions, they become evidence to the current style-pluralism and boundless access to information, education, knowledge, and images that envelope us today. In this light, Bernhard Martin’s works reflect an altercation between the individual and the contemporary phenomena of perpetual “stimulus-overflow”.

*Born in Hannover in 1966, Berlin-based painter and sculptor, Bernhard Martin has found international success since his debut in 1989. After studying at the Fine Arts Academy in Kassel, Martin spent time living in Frankfurt and Barcelona, before settling in Berlin in the early 1990’s.*

*Some of Martin’s important solo exhibitions contain the Städtische Gallerie Wolfsburg (2008/09), Museum Fridericianum, Kassel (1993), Villa Arson in Nice, MAMACO in Geneva (2002), the P.S. 1. MOMA in New York (2001), and the Arario Museum, Seoul (2006). Additionally, Martin has been a part of many group exhibitions, including and the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst in Zurich (2004), the Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin (2008), the Kunsthalle Mannheim (2006), Museum der Moderne in Salzburg (2005), the ZKM in Karlsruhe, and the Frankfurter Kunstverein (2003). He is the winner of the Art Award of the City of Wolfsburg in 2008.*

Opening hours  
Tues.–Sat.  
12–6pm  
and by appointment

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