

Prophetic Fallacy

Preview: 11th October 2007 5 pm – 10 pm

Dates: 12th October – 4th November 2007

Times: Fri – Sun 12pm – 6pm & by appt

Sublime, other, uncanny – all familiar critical adjectives that might help to describe the painting and photographic practices of Lee Maelzer and Marianne Engel. But to lean on such words too heavily is likely to result in falling headlong into each of the seductive frames these artists create that bit too sure of what we are being presented with. Given that both use very different but equally potent visual ruses to veil and bring to light the intimate details of urban and natural habitats already filed within the collective consciousness, references to film, art and literature are everywhere and therefore vigilance is key.

Maelzer and Engel are very aware of the evocative power of the other's principle media. Engel often creates bucolic fiction from nocturnal fact, with a painterly use of light, while Maelzer's unearthly twilight glaze over the everyday resonates with photographic concerns. Scale, for both, is a carefully deployed tool with which to describe 'real life' from an epic or fantastical perspective, or reclaim traditional landscape territory; technique a means of netting response and picking at the edges of what, pictorially, they can achieve.

Where close-contact, almost scientific study appears to form the basis of Engel's understanding of the environments she inhabits, Maelzer's equally unwavering eye closes in on each chosen territory with the specificity of a private dick momentarily drawn by a glimpse of something unexpected. It is this simultaneous sense of obsession with and personal distance from the subject that underpins the disquieting effect of these works and keeps them hovering above the art categorical quicksand.

Lee Maelzer has exhibited in various group and solo shows domestically and internationally, at London spaces Museum 52, Bloomberg (ART futures) Transition and Cell Project Space and Eau Sauvage, Lucy Mackintosh Gallery Lausanne. Awards include the Arts Council of England Fellowship, Colima, Mexico, the Abbey Fellowship from the British School at Rome and the John Moores Prize. Maelzer lives and works in London.

Marianne Engel is based in Zürich. Recent Swiss shows include Forum Vebikus/Kammgam, Schaffhausen and Speed, Galerie Staubkohler (who represent Engel) in Zürich and Reale Fantasien, Fotomuseum Winterthur. In the UK, Engel featured earlier this year in the group show 'Hoot' at Studio 1.1, London and was selected for this year's Braziers International workshop in Oxfordshire.

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