

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

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“New Work”

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523 West 24th Street, 522 West 22nd Street, and 526 West 22nd Street

September 10–October 16

This group exhibition features recent pieces by seven of Matthew Marks’s marquee, midcareer artists. What it lacks in coherence it makes up for in the delight of seeing familiar names delivering technically proficient, visually arresting work. If there is a leitmotif here, it is scale: The show spans two buildings containing voluminous gallery spaces, and offers works that range from the uncannily miniature to the sublimely massive. Two chromatically rich (but comparatively unimaginative) paintings by Terry Winters are resoundingly upstaged in one gallery by Dortmund, 2009, by Andreas Gursky. During a year in which the commercial and political stakes of soccer matches were underscored, it is significant to see this ten-foot picture of grandstands in such hypersaturated detail; from afar it replicates the dimensions and tonal gradation of midcentury abstraction. By contrast, a pair of sculptures in polyester and paint by Katharina Fritsch occupy the scale-model register. The sumptuously orange *Oktopus/Octopus*, 2010, is a Lilliputian oceanic monster entangling a deep-sea diver, and it is by turns whimsical and unsettling, much like its counterpart, the aptly named *Riese/Giant*, 2010, complete with Ice Age-style club.

Heroes of the eighties, too, are present: Nan Goldin delivers ethereal portraits of friends and objects, using halos of light to render her subjects otherworldly. And Robert Gober returns with a drawing and two sculptures, each of which mines the queasy intersection between biology and manufacture. In the case of both Goldin and Gober, the work is familiar, if not outright predictable. This is not to say, however, that they are unwelcome—quite the opposite. “New Work” demonstrates the effectiveness of artists who are established but not yet past their prime. Even at the show’s weakest points, it’s refreshing to be in the presence of such skillful objects.

— Ian Bourland

Andreas Gursky, *Dortmund*, 2009, color photograph, 120 7/8 x 87 7/8”.

