

Thomas Eggerer

The Rules of the Fence

May 8 – June 19, 2010

Opening reception on Saturday, May 8, 6 to 8pm

Thomas Eggerer's new paintings feature figures in ambivalent spaces that are both expansive and limiting. The architectural elements in these works such as a fence in "Fence Romance" or the modernist frame in "Friday's Child" offer shelter and definition, and are nonetheless confining. A feeling of exposure and uncertainty is enhanced by the placement of the figures on slanted angles as in "Fence Romance" and even further by the orchestration of glances: the viewers' glances as well as a regime of glances within the paintings themselves. The ambivalence of Eggerer's spatial constructions provides a context for a time frame - holding and releasing, breathing in and out, before and after.

Each of the works in this exhibition demands a second look from the viewer in order to transport the findings between them, since they give hints of how to better read their primarily well-disguised narratives. At first they look like mostly well-constructed paintings, simply because of their distinction between on the one hand the abstractly painted color fields and on the other the play with ambivalent meanings of gestures of the different human figures. But apart from that, it is possible for the experienced viewer that the space of the third painting sometimes turns from a sci-fi-like time warp into an almost religiously uncanny space of, for instance, a biblical story from long ago. But maybe not.

In "Fence Romance" time seems to be rotating from some prehistoric glimmer to the first mundane situation within historic time. The painting within the modern public space is full of the ringing and jingling of the sweet early experience of public space and of education in youth. The painting of the yacht seems to be an international image, but there are some particular sounds in it that make it so close to what might be called the American experience. It is the apotheosis of "la situation Americain". The American-ness translates exactly half by means of content, by the poses of the represented groups of people, etc., and half through the mode of painting itself.

Josef Strau

This will be Thomas Eggerer's third solo exhibition at Friedrich Petzel Gallery. The show will open on Saturday May 8th, with a reception from 6-8 p.m. and will be on view through June 19th, 2010. Friedrich Petzel Gallery is located at 535 West 22nd Street, New York, NY 10011. For further information, please contact the gallery at 212-680-9467 or info@petzel.com.

Please join us Sunday May 9th at 12:30pm for a talk between art historian David Joselit and artist Thomas Eggerer. This event will be in conjunction with New York Gallery Week.