

Lothar Hempel

Umbrella

May 18 – June 24, 2006

May 1, 2006—Like loosely bound molecules, the elements of Lothar Hempel's exhibition vigorously interplay. For his sixth solo show at the Anton Kern Gallery, the Cologne-based artist brought together a group of figure paintings, collages, and a large sculptural installation including a twelve-foot rowboat. Hempel chose the human body in motion (with all its theatrical associations and uncertainties)

as the premise of the work. He combines materials in

unexpected ways and thus makes the coolness of the work's execution enter an emotive dance with the expressive richness of the human body. The exhibition reverberates in an atmosphere of overtones that subtly create additional meanings and nuances.



In an interview with Emma Stern, Hempel extrapolates on this idea:

ES: *What is "Umbrella"? The title triggers nostalgic associations. First it reminded me of a title of a musical or a Broadway show from the 40's.*

LH: [...] Indeed, I have been interested in dying arts recently, vaudeville artists, rope-walkers, circus people. It's a parallel universe. These vibrations, especially the painful and embarrassing ones, I consciously want to allow. After all, applied to the system of art this unfurls dazzling, shimmering effects.

ES: *Umbrellas and parasols are everywhere in this exhibition. Do they all mean the same thing?*

LH: [...] perhaps they have something in common: they contain a gesture of negation, they avert the sun, they outwit gravity, it is masquerade and deception—essentially a "no" to nature. A refusal, a rejection, a non-acceptance of the so-called "god-given." Which, by the way, reminds me of a religious group in the seventies in Cologne whose members stared into the sun for days while on LSD to achieve a certain trance-like visionary state. All of these people finally went blind. I hope the figures in my exhibition do exactly the opposite.

Lothar Hempel's work has been exhibited continuously in Europe and the U.S. since the early 1990s, most recently in solo exhibitions at the Dallas Museum of Art and the ICA London (both 2002). Recent group shows include exhibitions at the Sammlung Goetz in Munich (2005), the Tate Liverpool (2004), and P.S.1 in New York (2001).

The exhibition will be accompanied by an artist book entitled "Umbrella" including relevant images, a text by the artist and the full version of the interview. A pantomime performance will take place during the opening on May 18th from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M.

The exhibition will open on Thursday, May 18 and will run through Saturday, June 24, 2006. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am - 6 pm. For further information and images, please contact Joshua Smith, Christoph Gerozissis or Michael Clifton at (t) 212.367.9663, (f) 212.367.8135 or email: info@antonkerngallery.com.

Upcoming exhibition: *Implosion: Ten-Year Anniversary* (June 29 – July 28, 2006)

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