

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michael Krebber

Here It Is: The Painting Machine

October 11 – November 4, 2003

"I don't want to pretend that these paintings are so great, they are not, but they are glamorous indeed." -- Michael Krebber

The Greene Naftali Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Michael Krebber, entitled *Here It Is: The Painting Machine*, opening Friday, October 10, 2003. In this, his second solo show at Greene Naftali this year, Krebber will once again take up the challenge of working both within and against the conventions of painting.

In his last show, *Flaggs (Against Nature)*, factory-made fabrics were stretched and arranged so as to conduct a rhetorical debate with references spanning centuries of German painting and the dichotomy between representation and abstraction. In the absence of paint, Krebber continued the dialogue on the subject of his continued interest: painting itself. In the late-80s moment of post-painting institutional critique, where political imperatives were linked to collaborative project and site-specific work, Krebber maintained the possibility, however abject, for painting to contain the kind of rigorous self-critique the wider art-world had arrogated to other media and social investigation. Krebber's work has evolved a distinct position in relation to the present reemergence of painting as a genre without critical frame, projected onto a horizon defined less by discursive attention than by market interest.

With *Here It Is: The Painting Machine*, Krebber has reconciled with the painted stroke, but this relationship is not without complication. As always, Krebber's practice is rife with ambivalence, provocation, intransigence and feinted gesture. But it is through simulation, through the very essence of the age of mechanical reproduction, through the construct of "the painting machine" that it is possible to make a gesture at all. Krebber admits, "I can say the painting machine worked but lost its goal... only I imagine that I can 'see' that this machine is able or able at all or deals with being able at all to get on this simulation level without at all having given up to 'real' succeeding." On cheap, seemingly tacky fabrics, he explores the minimum of information necessary to begin signifying as paintings. The furtive lines, hasty marks and first hints of figuration and ground suggest that his real energies are to be found in the agonizing superabundance of sublimated forethought and self-consciousness that bind image and gesture to any larger meaning-context, as well as the attempt to distance himself from that paralysis. Left off, halted, poignantly or pathetically stuck, repeated again: Krebber's practice forces a recognition of superfluity.

One of the most important German artists working in the past two decades, Michael Krebber has been a central figure in the Cologne art scene since the 1980s, having collaborated with Martin Kippenberger and continuing to work with other artists, including Cosima von Bonin. His sharp, often inexorable judgments concerning art have earned him wide respect from fellow artists.

This is Krebber's third solo exhibition in New York. In Europe, his work was the subject of a large survey at the Kunstverein Braunschweig (1999) and has been exhibited frequently in galleries and museums, including Villa Arson, Nice; Museum Fredericianum, Kassel; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; and Galerie Christian Nagel. Krebber is a frequent contributor to *Texte zur Kunst* and *Starship* and currently teaches at the Städelschule in Frankfurt.