



## **NEW PAINTINGS STEFAN SEHLER**

OCTOBER 12 – DECEMBER 2, 2007

GALLERY HOURS: FRI TO MON 1 TO 7 PM

**OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY OCTOBER 12, 6 TO 9 PM**

BEER BY CARLSBERG

SHOWROOM: *The Third Eye* by **Mike Rogers**; **book launch** during the opening reception\*

Parker's Box is proud to present its third solo show of new paintings by the Berlin artist, Stefan Sehler.

As a painter, Stefan Sehler has always had a tendency to set himself impossible challenges- like his choice of what ostensibly are particularly conservative subjects- flowers and landscapes for example, as a vehicle for contemporary research. Such choices are anything but arbitrary, however, and form part of a most disciplined practice through which Sehler aims with strong-headed deliberation at exploring the most rarefied echelons of contemporary painting methodology. Not for him the currently fashionable return (for the umpteenth time) to jokey figuration in a pseudo-naïve style.

Stefan Sehler deals more specifically than perhaps any other painter today, with the mechanism of the spectator's relationship to the painted surface, and how this affects our perception of images. The most extraordinary (but logical) aspect of this is that he denies physical access to that very surface through his choice of technique- that of reverse painting on Plexiglas.

As Dr. Susan Canning has written in the new monography published on Sehler's work:

"(Sehler's) process underlines the generative artistic act by pointing it out. The end result lets one see the materials, see the paint that retains its synthetic aspect, that indirectly refers to mountains or flowers. Only desire on the part of the spectator makes the paint become its subject. In a similar way, the spectator desires the materiality of the paint and surface but can only guess at that experience. The Plexiglas perversely bolsters the work's materiality by denying it, while at the same time being ironic- simultaneously protecting the act of representation and distancing the viewer from it."

As his painting practice evolves, Stefan Sehler proceeds with a methodical approach that shows near scientific intent. The artist generally works in series, like so many parallel experiments as he seeks to achieve total control over his paint, while at the same time liberating it completely. In the works presented at Parker's Box, the artist's reverse painting technique uses ever more refined methods of masking. This allows the most meticulous of drawn contours to finely delineate contrasting areas of anarchic applications of dripping, dribbling and oozing paint, that of course are totally flattened by the Plexiglas. In this way, the confrontation between figuration and abstraction is heightened, while framing techniques add to the unavoidably strong references to contemporary (German) photography. However the fact that his paintings are so often initially mistaken for photographs depends more on his choice of subjects from the natural world, (where imperfection and abstraction reign) adding to the complex relationships and irony that operate within the work. As Dr. Canning points out: "the artifice used in Sehler's paintings is necessarily more real, more truthful than nature".

\*In the Showroom, Parker's Box artist, Mike Rogers presents the original drawings from his book, *The Third Eye*, published by Fundació 30km/s, Barcelona ([www.edicions30kms.net](http://www.edicions30kms.net))

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