

Aaron Wexler

Mind over Matter

May 25 – July 1 , 2006

Opening: Thursday, May 25 from 6-8 PM

Josee Bienvenu Gallery is pleased to present *Mind Over Matter*, Aaron Wexler's first one-person exhibition. Aaron Wexler operates within a complex matrix of acrylic and paper collage on panel and paper. The Ghostly mat acrylic surfaces of his paintings are gently incised and peeled away to reveal playful dreamscapes of free association. All at once his work synthesizes abstraction and figuration, physical and psychological space, optimism and anxiety. It is imbued with a fragile equilibrium of opposites.

Aaron Wexler's imagery is nuanced and layered, vaguely familiar and yet strangely enigmatic. He speaks with a fluent abstract vocabulary never entirely divorced from representation. Precariously balanced on a precipice of uncertainty, his work addresses the struggle between the Apollonian principle of order and individuation and the Dionysian notions of passion, excess, and ultimately destruction.

For instance, *Never Die*, a seductive and yet disconcerting panel is a disorienting descent into a swirling vortex of butterfly wings. It recalls the spiraling and spatial growth of the Fibonacci sequence. The eye enters the work in rapid recession toward the center amid a seemingly chaotic entanglement of dismembered arthropods. It plummets downward into a space filled with wings—objects that give flight.

Hard Drops Fall Softly conveys at once an immediate imaginary landscape and the distant geological memory of a nascent world that no longer exists. Droplets of varying size and the splash patterns they create punctuate the surface. There is a multitude of images within images repeated throughout the composition. Many droplets contain fragmented patterns or drops within themselves together cascading into an intricate mosaic that alludes to the frozen temporality reminiscent of strobe photography.

All of Them, I've Stung (72 x 60 inches) is the largest of the nine works included in the exhibition. It depicts a delicate environment that teeters on the edge of anxious and painful anticipation. Set against the background of an enormous kaleidoscopic green eye is a group of bees perched rapaciously on a series of floating organic shapes. The eye, pulled close to the picture plane, serves as a backdrop for the activity. Its fragility is about to be pierced by the bees' venomous points. An enigmatic jumble of interlocking shapes, Aaron Wexler's overlapping curving geometry elicits anatomical deconstruction. The result is a group of tension-filled images of subtle but present disquietude.

Aaron Wexler was born in 1974 in Philadelphia; he lives and works in Brooklyn. He received his M.F.A from the School of The Art Institute of Chicago in 1999. His work has been included in various group shows in New York: The National Academy of Design, PS122 gallery, Jack the Pelican Presents, Oliver Kamm Gallery and Lehmann Maupin.

A full essay by Marshall N. Price, curator at the National Academy of Design, is available at www.joseebienvenugallery.com