

Maria Volk

rabatten vom himmel

June 28 - August 11, 2012

Opening on Thursday, June 28, 2012

7 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

In her second solo exhibition at Galerie Cinzia Friedlaender, Maria Volk continues the exploration of the intimate realm of her own psyche through dreams, commenced in her first exhibition. With a technique that involves automatism and swift gestures, she attempts to transfigure abstract mental processes, the fleeting visual details of her dreams and other forays into the subconscious unto the canvas.

The German word *Rabatten* refers to a garden segments with different genres of flowers or produce. Derived from the French "rebattre" - beat, put down or flip (*zurueckschlagen, umschlagen*) the title also makes a reference to her own technique: In her large scale figurations, Volk uses a form of printing and stenciling, in which she dabs dots of acrylic and color pigment on sheets of paper, and then presses them onto the nettle cloth. She creates large scale triptychs, where the paper stencils are used over and over again, so that the shapes appear finer, more translucent and more hinted at with every repetition.

Repetition is central to the work, and the constant movement back and forth is also evident in the motifs themselves. The flowers and flower beds, which are drawn in an almost childlike fashion as a big loop with a straight line on the bottom, convey in fact an endless circular movement of the wrist. The beds themselves are angular and jutting into each other, "negative" and "positive", "female" and "male" like pieces of the DNA. This trace of a movement inward and outward along the contours reflects the attempt to connect the shards and slivers of memory or bits and pieces of dreams, and to return to a very subjective intimate knowledge that always seems to be fading out or, once attained, merely the tip of something much bigger and endlessly elusive.

While Maria Volk's motivations and her physical and gestural technique might be very subjective, the pictorial language she creates is objective to the point where it's almost iconographic. The flower, drawn with one continuous line could almost be a universal icon for flower, and her round Rococo roses are flirting with familiar imagery of romanticized kitsch. However, the 'unfinishedness' of the motifs, the feeling that everything we see is a detail of something so much grander it is hardly tangible, is both uncanny and seductive at the same time. It's an expression of a human necessity of reaching back into a different state of consciousness and creating a bridge between two different ways of being. The challenge is to translate the language of the one that is slightly beyond our reach into the one that we can comprehend in a picture.

Text: Hili Perlson