

Press Release

John Miller
The Totality of All Things as They Actually Exist

May 1 – June 05, 2010
Opening Friday, April 30, 4 – 9 pm
Gallery hours Tuesday – Saturday, 11 am – 6 pm



The Totality of All Things As They Actually Exist – this is a broad definition of reality which the American artist John Miller (born 1954) has chosen for his sixth solo exhibition at Galerie Barbara Weiss.

In Miller's new paintings, you see individuals depicted in various settings, all of whose faces show spontaneous emotion. They are in shock and sadness, reacting perhaps to bad news. Miller, however, took these images from reality - TV Shows, still images published on the Internet. This leads straight to the question of the authenticity of these emotions. What TV today sells us in the name of reality, is increasingly staged as a television producer's commodity, based on the assumption that the structure of reality is like a game that can be calculated and controlled using the rules of game theory,* just as the actions of the protagonists of reality shows can be made to perform on demand for the cameras. Recalling the game show paintings Miller exhibited at Galerie Weiss in 1999, this new series of works offers an extended observation on reality and the loss of reality.

Miller's other works shown here contrast with the paintings. He has placed filing cabinets on wooden bases, inside of which are files with unused printing paper and framed sheets of writing paper without text. This conjures up an atmosphere of the bureaucratic storage of data, of systemization and control. But because all the sheets of paper are without visible and traceable content, they stand for the fact that whatever has no clear symbolic meaning, but remains (psychologically) repressed, cannot be controlled from the outside. This potential could well be seen as a challenge to the would-be empiricism of contemporary reality TV as John Miller sees it.

The exhibition also includes three music clips by the virtual band *Robot* (John Miller and Takuji Kogo). These clips use electronically generated instrumental sound and repetitive song texts – *I'm.../I like.../I think...* – that Miller and Kogo have taken from personal ads. This too is a genre where the image presented rarely coincides with reality, as it creates its own reality instead. The pictorial material in these clips was created together with other artists such as Aura Rosenberg and Nic Cuagnini.

* Game theory is a field in mathematics that posits models for systems with more than one agent. It attempts to predict rational decision-making processes in situations of social conflict.

John Miller will be attending the exhibition opening.

On the first floor, the gallery is also showing a simultaneous exhibition of new works by the American artist Mary Heilmann (born 1940), *Home Sweet Home*. Heilmann is an important New York friend of John Miller and fellow artist.