

bernard jacobson gallery

Pia Fries

Schwarzwild

1st – 30th June 2006

Pia Fries is part of a new generation of painters, which grapples with the possibility of abstract painting in the 21st century. Born in 1955 in Switzerland, Fries originally studied sculpture at the École des Beaux Arts in Lucerne. Later she studied painting under Gerhard Richter at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf from 1980 - 86 and now lives and works in Dusseldorf. Fries has since shown extensively in Europe and the United States. This, however, will be her first solo exhibition in London.

In these new paintings, collectively entitled *Schwarzwild* (wild pig), Fries begins with a skeleton of imagery taken from black and white botanical illustrations by Maria Sibylla Merian (1647-1717), details of which are screen-printed onto the hard wooden surface of the support. Working within this framework, oil paint is squeezed, brushed and moulded using a variety of application tools, some of which are more usually found in the kitchen. Although complex in their imagery and with obvious reference to the great American Abstract Expressionists these paintings have a particularly contemporary European freshness to them.

Pia Fries will be having a retrospective exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Wintherthur in 2007.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with a specially commissioned text by Dave Hickey, winner of the MacArthur Foundation 2001 "Genius" award.