

PRESS RELEASE

## ANDREAS HOFER PHANTOM GALLERY

26 January – 8 March 2008

The exhibition opens simultaneously in Zürich and Los Angeles.

Zürich: 26 January, 8 – 10pm

Los Angeles, 7556 Sunset Blvd: 26 January, 11 am – 5pm

Andreas Hofer creates independent, highly complex visual worlds: hybrids of figures, signs, landscapes and scripts of varied and apparently unconnected origins which he describes as being “completely clean of art”. His knowing defiance of the didactic in his appropriation of imagery sees comic superheroes and archvillains, generic political figures and symbols and icons of film and literary history – never from the artworld – coexisting in realms that are difficult to place and read, and remarkably free of nostalgia. This sense of timelessness, both in terms of date and genre, is further complicated by Hofer’s tendency to sign individual works ‘Andy Hope 1930’. His alter ego remains fixed in a year of shortlived optimism and enormous social upheaval, leading to the dominance of ominous forces in Europe, notably National Socialism in his native Germany.

Agile appropriation and reinvention of existing locations are at the heart of Hofer’s exhibition practice. His shows are often set in spaces unassociated with any context of art presentation: rooms and abodes that are either still occupied or marked by the histories of those who have previously dwelt or worked in them. Having lived next to a thrift store for a decade, for a piece named after its proprietor and made in 1996, *c/o Puschmann*, Hofer moved much of its contents to a Munich art space where he’d invited artists and friends to exhibit and sell their own objects. He transformed part of the Christine Mayer Gallery, also in Munich, into the *Batman Gallery* in 2004. This intimate, but aroitly reconfigured installation was augmented by a subtle, secondary work in the same building’s abandoned attic. In October last year Hofer hung 13 portraits of iconically beautiful but haunted women on the walls of a private apartment within an old, elegant Parisian residence, for his *Sweet Troubled Souls* show. Prior to hanging them, he stripped the apartment of all its large paintings, revealing layers of paint on patches of wall that told tales of previous inhabitants’ changing predilections. The scars and marks of things past were also evoked by the women’s visages, which, in a darkened home illuminated only by small lights attached to each frame, acquired a ghostly ambience.

Hofer’s interest in spaces that have been lived in, and in the traces of former things once within them, are central to *Phantom Gallery*. His love of doubling spaces, of

confusing and dismantling boundaries, has led to the decision to open and show this exhibition simultaneously in two cities, both venues interconnected by a live video conference. In Zürich and Los Angeles, visitors enter a room within a room, a gallery within the gallery. While in the latter the show appears as a gallery within a commercial stretch of street, a shop in the line of the storefronts on Hollywood's Sunset Boulevard, the exhibitions themselves are, in contrast to Hofer's visual world, unpopulated and empty. A former living space that seems palpably present is simultaneously, and quite obviously, recognizable as an artificial setting.

Andreas Hofer was born in 1963 in Munich and lives and works in Berlin. Between 1991 and 1997 he attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich and the Chelsea College of Art & Design in London. He has had solo exhibitions in 2007 in the MARTa Museum in Herford (*The Long Tomorrow*), at Metro Pictures in New York (*Only Gods Could Survive*) and in Paris (*Sweet Troubled Souls*), presented by Hauser & Wirth Zürich, London and Silverbridge. Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus in Munich dedicated a comprehensive museum exhibition to Hofer in 2005, entitled *Welt ohne Ende* (World without end).

Hofer's works have also been shown in numerous group exhibitions, most recently in *Euro-Centric* at Rubell Family Collection in Miami, in *Paul Thek. In the Context of Today's Contemporary Art*, at ZKM Centre of Art and Media, Karlsruhe (until 30 March 2008) and *There is never a stop and never a finish – In memoriam of Jason Rhoades* at Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin, and *Made in Germany* at the Kestner Gesellschaft, Sprengel Museum and Hannover Kunstverein.

A catalogue accompanying the exhibition *This Island Earth* (2006) was published by Steidl and Hauser & Wirth and features texts by Caoimhín Mac Giolla Léith and J. G. Ballard.

For further information and visual material, please contact

HAUSER & WIRTH ZÜRICH, Tel. +41 44 446 80 50, [zurich@hauserwirth.com](mailto:zurich@hauserwirth.com)

OPENING HOURS LOS ANGELES Tuesday to Friday 12 – 6pm, Saturday 11am – 5pm

NEXT EXHIBITION: Dan Graham, 5 April – 17 May 2008