

Jonathan Monk

*Dutch Details and other details*

30.11. - 22.12.2004

04.01. - 08.01.2005

BüroFriedrich is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Berlin based artist Jonathan Monk *Dutch details and other details*. Monk also inaugurated the activities in BüroFriedrich's current location with a film screening of his Gilbert and George work *Lost Days* (2002).

The current exhibition title refers to Ed Ruscha's limited edition photo book *Dutch Details* (1971) which also served as inspiration for Monk's elegiac series of 41 slides *Today is just a copy of yesterday (Amsterdam)* (2002). The work involves the daily re-photographing of a projection demonstrating that time does tell, but more often than not through a process of either gradual erasure or complete transformation. One of the impetuses for choice of works on show was to cross reference some lesser known examples of Dutch or Netherlands related conceptual art cognizant of the Dutch connection of BüroFriedrich. The poster accompanying the exhibition for instance, shows an enlarged detail taken from an invitation card designed by the artist Jan Dibbets. The same invitation card appears in Monk's hand in his new work *Hand Held Gesture* (2004), a work which is both mockingly affirmative and a kind of doomed-to-fail handheld attempt at occupying centre field.

Jonathan Monk has an enthusiast's approach to art history and a keen sense of how the radical thought and methods he finds there might be reapplied and reinterpreted today. Monk's engagement with conceptual art modes, in particular the documentary, is far from purist, his works are nearly always inflected with dry humour or melancholy or sometimes both. He also revels in the absurd for example, in his on going text series proposing meetings in diverse places at future dates that he may not attend, the latest of which will take place in the Hague. Monk's 16mm films, text pieces and photographic works often involve a kind of conceptual super-impositions in which the originals he refers to, evokes, appropriates, or reproduces under new conditions and in new forms, seem to cohabit his own work. This doubling method creates slippages that emphasize differences and which involves at least in part a reflection on the benefits and deficits of hindsight.

Some original invitations to Robert Barry's action closing

galleries in Amsterdam, Los Angeles and Turin are also included in the exhibition. In the past Monk too has engaged in acts of symbolic, if slightly tongue in cheek negation - his photographic documentation of *Cancelled Project* (1990) - an action where the artist stuck cancelled signs on a whole series of advertising posters on a street, in a knowingly futile attempt to try and make nothing happen.