

## BLUM & POE

Matt Saunders

### *China in Nixon*

November 11 - December 22, 2011

Opening reception: Saturday, November 12, 6-8pm

Blum & Poe is very pleased to present *China in Nixon*, Matt Saunders' first solo exhibition in Los Angeles and his first with Blum & Poe. For this exhibition, Saunders presents two interrelated bodies of work: large-scale unique photographic prints produced from hand-painted "negatives" and a new animated video made from thousands of individual ink drawings on Mylar.

Beginning as oil paintings on stretched linen, Saunders then uses these canvases as "negatives" in the darkroom, passing light through them to expose large sheets of photographic paper. The photographs capture and transform the image as the emulsion registers such qualities as transparency, thickness, and shifting depth of field. The use of hand-applied chemistry expands the dialogue between images and the materials and processes that produce them. Drawing from a wide range of subjects - notably the recently deceased British television star (and Los Angeles transplant) Patrick McGoochan and early Danish silent film star Asta Nielsen - Saunders' photographs serve as ersatz paintings in a portrait gallery of homage and association.

Similarly rich and unsettling are Saunders' short animations. Appropriating fragments of film, television, and historical footage, Saunders precariously balances the image with materials, creating flickering passages of constant change. The use of drawing, painting, and photographic techniques to create both still and moving imagery allows Saunders' work to operate outside of conventional media specificity. This hybrid practice merges the emphatic power of the individual image with the fleet ambiguity of the artist's process. The works in *China in Nixon* present a vision both ghost-like and bluntly material. The photographic and hand-drawn processes do not so much record the images as re-form them. Moving or still, pictures can seem irradiated, willfully uncertain and surely unstable.

Matt Saunders (b. 1975, Tacoma, Washington) received his B.A. in Visual and Environmental Studies from Harvard, where he is currently a visiting professor, and his M.F.A. in painting and printmaking from Yale. Saunders lives and works in Berlin and Cambridge, MA. He has exhibited widely, including solo exhibitions at Marian Goodman Gallery, Paris; the Renaissance Society, Chicago; Harris Lieberman, New York; and has been included in group exhibitions at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin. Saunders' work is in numerous public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT; and the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, MA. Saunders' animated video *Mirror Lamp* will be presented on a 7000-square-foot projection wall of the New World Center as a part of this year's public video program at Art Basel Miami Beach.

For further information and press materials, please contact the gallery at (310) 836-2062 or [info@blumandpoe.com](mailto:info@blumandpoe.com).