



For Immediate Release

Contact: Marina Hadley
marina@monkdogz.com

Hans Meertens *"Remote Control"*

What has been said...

With an element of irony and a tinge of menace, Hans Meertens (Nijmegen, Holland, 1975) transposes his dynamic inner visions onto the canvas, exploring fundamental, universal themes such as love and loss, human relations and the role of the individual in today's society. In his acclaimed and ever expanding *Sofa Girls* series, the various shapes and expressions of the artist's fictional muses are set against a couch, a floor lamp and a living room and its supposed security. These works - texturally rich and vividly coloured - focus on intimacy, contact and communication and the issue of control within that. Hinting at psychosexual tensions, Meertens reveals a much darker side to his practice with his *Counterphobia* series. In his most sober painting style so far, he exposes beautifully shaped women as forlorn travellers through desolate landscapes of poisoned woods, nuclear devastation and genetic mutation in a sinister and apocalyptic world. In one work these riggish woodland nymphs may appear vulnerable, in another impressively dangerous. There is a charged and yet restrained atmosphere created by unsettling, dreamlike juxtapositions and the tension between innocence and an almost palpable sense of violence.

His elaborate, intricately worked paintings, collages and drawings show both influences of American Graffiti and European, decadent, narrative art. Strength and energy are the trademarks of his instinctive painting style in which he blurs the boundaries between painting and drawing. In creating his *graphic punk*, as Meertens himself describes his art, he uses and combines multiple techniques. Mainly he works with acrylics, Indian ink, oil sticks and paint spray, but often he also adds bits of paper and fabric to his paintings. *Laced Fantasies*, his latest series of paintings, consists of stitched-together sections of unstretched canvas, decorated with lace on the sides. Combining different layers together into one cohesive entity, he creates dramatic levels and atmospheres, which entice the viewers' eye to discover his expressive, mysterious language that has the power to pull the viewer into his work. Hans Meertens' artistry raises questions, causes chills, calls forth strange associations, evokes smiles, provokes discussions and thus, it is extremely touching.

What the gallery is saying...

Hans Meertens arrives from Amsterdam with his dark shadows, imagination and sense of humor intact. His characters although appearing to exist in an alternative space are in reality extremely focused in the here and now. So much so that at some point one gets the feeling that it is the viewer who is on exhibition and being studied by the pigment and canvas characters of Meertens' mind.

Although fine arts trained in both Great Britain and Holland, Meertens brings outsider's rawness to his beautifully executed characters; a combination that engages, then seduces the viewer and in the end leaves you feeling somewhat haunted yet strangely fulfilled.

Although Meertens has exhibited and been reviewed extensively throughout Denmark and Holland by their reputable galleries, museums and press, this will be his first Solo exhibition in New York City. It promises to rise above an explosive exhibition and deliver a powerful yet delicious assault on both the inquisitive mind and deviant senses.

What will you have to say?