

WILHELM SASNAL**10 Oct - 18 Nov 2006**

For his second exhibition at Sadie Coles HQ, this particular group of Wilhelm Sasnal's paintings take an obliquely political viewpoint. The images tangentially refer to energy, power, geopolitics and oil. In addressing these subjects, he utilises an eclectic bank of references, often choosing to hone in on unexpected detail.

Much of the imagery comes from photographic records of Sasnal's recent travels through Europe, South America, Africa and Texas. In one painting, a map of Africa and South America is reconfigured to show them as neighbours; another painting is of the Atlas mountains in Morocco. Sasnal visualises other sensory experiences, painting the loudspeaker of a mosque as it emits the call to prayer, or the energy field around a microphone on a stand. As well as from his immediate surroundings, Sasnal continues to pluck images from the media; downloaded internet mugshots provide the source for a group of black and white portraits of stereotypical Arab men.

JJ Charlesworth in his essay "Wilhelm Sasnal: Dis-Scriptio" offers an interesting analysis of Sasnal's paintings:

Sasnal's work, for all its apparent coolness, is an art of quiet and surprisingly emotional reflection. Thinking, rethinking and working over the sense of what we encounter in our common visual world, the surface of painting becomes a space of slowed-down exchange, an act which asks us to hold back from the comfortable security of the immediate, single sense of image. Instead, Sasnal's works encourage us to wait, to linger, to keep looking at the world, because it is not something fixed or finite, but manifold and elusive. For Sasnal, painting is the site where that constant reappraisal can take place [...]. As such, his images reveal a deep intimacy with their sources, a paradoxical energy that, because of the ever-probing uncertainty at the heart of his method, bond his paintings inseparably to the things they refer to. Wilhelm Sasnal has had solo shows throughout Europe and the US, including *Matrix*, The Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley (CA), 2005, *Wilhelm Sasnal – Chinati Artist in Residence*, The Locker Plant, Marfa (TX), 2005 and at Camden Arts Centre, London, 2004. He was included in the *XXVI Bienal de Sao Paulo*, 2004 and was shortlisted, with four other finalists, for this year's Vincent Prize at the Stedelijk Museum.

From JJ Charlesworth, "Wilhelm Sasnal: Dis-Scriptio", *Wilhelm Sasnal*, (London: Sadie Coles HQ, 2004)