

# nicola von senger

**Mario Sala**

**SUNDAYS**

August 30 - October 18, 2008

Nicola von Senger Gallery is pleased to present new insights into the multifaceted universe of Mario Sala. Born in Switzerland in 1965, Sala captivates us again and again with his densely interconnected paintings and sculptures which transform the exhibition space into an expansive field of associations. Sundays, and the many meanings and feelings associated therewith, serve as the central theme in this series of new work.

The exhibition begins with "Allensbach" a reworked photograph depicting a deceptively calm village soaked in glistening summer light. The image immediately raises the question, what's really going on beneath this apparent tranquility. What is the meaning of the paint film flowing downward from the image's top edge which seems to simultaneously protect and divide this "ideal" world?

The tension emitted from this photo represents the principal idea of "Sundays." Sunday, the 'day of rest', the day upon which creation was completed allows us the leisure of reflecting upon the world, retreating at the end of the work-week, and celebrating. But Sunday also presents us with time for self examination. In "Sunday" (2008), a one-eyed muscle man uses this time to wring out his mirror image, bringing forth dark, smeary streaks. In "Untitled I-VI" (2008) abstracted escutcheons on car engine hoods take on the form of contemporary banners transforming the gallery into a sort of knight's hall of art, guaranteeing protection from such harsh, loveless insights.

The calming center of the exhibition is the black table "Tisch" (2008) placed in the middle of the room like the traditional Sunday roast. This sculpture acts as a tin god, reminding us of the archaic aspects of ritualistic cycles.

Finally in a separate cabinet the curved mirror, "Spiegel" (2008), distorts two ordinary contact strips "Reflex" (2008) into the psychedelic capturing the viewer in its maelstrom and pulling him in to the reflective world of Allensbach. These precisely composed provocations open up a terrain typical for Sala. The gallery becomes a diving board from which the visitors can plunge into Sala's work, lose themselves, and eventually find themselves again.

Though the "Drifter" is absent in these works, the figure remains Sala's driving force. An interaction of apparently disparate elements which vacillate between the fantastic and the banal, evoke familiar perceptions which are at once delicate, precise and multilayered. The tight interplay of varied media, objects, reference systems and content produces a quirky cosmos which, without balking at its deeper meaning, invites the visitor to linger.

Rémi Jaccard, July 2008

Translation: Elaine Vogel Keller

For further information and images please contact the gallery:  
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