

Press Release

Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann
Tupelo

March 7 – April 21, 2013



Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann, *Maw*, 2011, 178 x 305 cm, acrylic, woodcut and sumi ink on paper

Galerie Kashya Hildebrand is pleased to present the emerging artist Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann's first solo show with the gallery and the first presentation of her work in Switzerland. Mann's works in this exhibition show how patterned, highly wrought, decorative elements coalesce from the chaos and contingency of an organic environment—and how they dissolve into that environment again. The works in her exhibition, entitled *Tupelo*, which refers to a particular type of tree called a Swamp Tree or Black Gum tree, can be seen as referencing the process of growths in a swamp and yet also hovering between portholes into alien environments and portraits of contained and individualized creatures.

Mann begins each piece with a stain of color, the product of chance evaporation of a puddle of ink and water on the paper as it lies on the floor of the studio. Her method of creation is slow and incremental, beginning with an initial pour of paint and then expanding, growing outwards. The painting eventually exposes the organic stain that she then paints around, sometimes collaging with woodblock prints. From this shape, she nourishes the landscape of each painting, coaxing from this organic foundation the development of diverse, decorative forms: braids of hair, details from Beijing opera costuming, lattice-work, and sequined patterns. Although articles of adornment, these elements are repeated until they too appear organic, even cancerous, as they at once highlight and suffocate the underlying ink-stained foundation. Each piece is tense with

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the threat of disunity and incoherence as nature and artifice spring from and merge into one another, and as different elements multiply and expand like poisonous growths. The works reference traditional landscaping painting although in an abstract form in the way that the larger works feel like environments.

Through this conflation of ideas—plants, bodies and diseases—the exhibition explores a baroque abstract: a celebration of the abundance of connections and clashes that can be found in the disparate mess of matter in the world. As hybrids—life-sized fields punctuated by moments of absurdity, poetry, mutation, growth and decay—the works glory in the sensuous and the rambling, and intersperse the chaos with moments of neurotic control, suggesting not only the potentialities of growth, but also the threats of overabundance.

Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann (b. 1983, Madison, WI, USA) lives and works in Washington, DC.

Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann received her BA from Brown University and MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art. She is the recipient of a Fulbright grant to Taiwan, the AIR Gallery Fellowship program in Brooklyn, NY, and the So-Hamiltonian Fellowship in Washington, DC. She has attended residencies at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Blue Sky Dayton, Vermont Studio Center, Salzburg Kunstlerhaus, Triangle Workshop, and Anderson Ranch Art Center. The venues where Mann has shown her work include the Walters Art Museum, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Rawls Museum, the US consulate in Dubai, UAE, and the US embassy in Yaounde, Cameroon. Mann is currently an instructor at the Maryland Institute College of Art.

The artist will be present at the opening reception:

Thursday, March 7, 2013 from 6–8pm

Press release and images may be downloaded under:

<http://www.kashyahildebrand.org/zurich/press/tupelo>

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