

David Zwirner
525 West 19 Street
New York, NY 10011
Tel 212-727-2070 Fax 212-727-2072
info@davidzwirner.com
www.davidzwirner.com

Zwirner & Wirth
32 East 69 Street
New York, NY 10021
Tel 212-517-8677 Fax 212-517-4178
info@zwirnerandwirth.com
www.zwirnerandwirth.com

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EXHIBITION: *Diana Thater: New Work*

DATES: January 7 – February 6, 2005

Opening Reception: Friday, January 7, 2005, 6:00 - 8:00pm

David Zwirner and Zwirner & Wirth are pleased to present a two-part exhibition by **Diana Thater**. Most recently, Thater’s work was the subject of a large survey exhibition at two concurrent venues: *Diana Thater: Keep the Faith. A Survey Exhibition* at Kunsthalle Bremen, Bremen, Germany and Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen, Siegen, Germany.

In her fourth solo exhibition at the downtown gallery, Thater will present a new and yet untitled installation constructed with footage shot in the Panamanian rainforest. As part of a Fulbright research group, Thater spent a month in Panama studying the natural and urban environments. She received permission from the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute to use one of two 300-foot cranes that is permanently installed in the rainforest for use by scientists. From the basket on the arm of the crane, Thater filmed the canopy and its inhabitants. Other works in the exhibition include *Snake River* (1994), *Foam, Shimmer*, and *Surface Effect* (all 1997), and *A Series of Events* (2003). Also on view will be a new 16mm film entitled *Jump*, a collaboration with T. Kelly Mason that depicts a group of twenty synchronized jump ropers set to Bob Dylan’s “Subterranean Homesick Blues.” The 16mm film will be screened at the opening reception.

On view uptown at Zwirner & Wirth will be a site-specific installation projected on the gallery’s façade. *Unisphere* (1998) and *White is the Color* (2002) will be on view in the gallery’s interior.

Since her first solo exhibition in 1990, Diana Thater has been a defining force in the medium of video installation. Within a framework determined in part by the limitations of the medium, the works in this exhibition examine themes of transformation, abstraction vs. animation, and light as formal structure. The artist will treat the downtown gallery’s skylights and façade with colored gels and, in the interior spaces, images will be displayed on monitors or projected directly onto the walls. Using the architecture of the gallery as a means of interaction with her images, Thater transforms the exhibition space by casting fields of colored light similar to color field painting.

In *A Series of Events* (2003), phrases spelled out a film marquee are formed from sentence fragments divided onto two monitors. The viewer is coerced into imagining a narrative based on the text alone: “caged, empty,” “animals,” and “blue dash eyed” are among the words that, through repetition and cognition, begin to function as images. Reconnecting with Thater’s early work made in index form, the text on the marquee functions as an inverted poem and runs alphabetically.

Highly conceptual early works such as *Snake River* (1994) underscore Thater’s deconstruction of the technological aspects of the medium and her insistence on the ability of video images to transcend their merely optical properties. Works such as *Foam, Shimmer*, and *Surface Effect* (all 1997), which focus as much on the physical objects that make video images possible – monitors, DVD players, electrical cords – challenge preconceived ways of viewing and processing images by placing the viewer in an experiential “space,” one that intimates a dialogue while simultaneously subverting the idea of sequential images as cohesive and linear narrative.

Unisphere (1998), on view at Zwirner & Wirth, was Thater’s first experiment with designing and making her own video monitors that are endemic to a work. The central work on view uptown, *White Is The Color* (2002), addresses the difference between the sublime and the beautiful with images that appear to be clouds but are actually forest fires. The structure of this seminal work references Dan Flavin’s light sculptures with the inclusion of a fluorescent tube on the floor. The conceptual basis of *White Is The Color* will be extended as a projection on the five-story façade of Zwirner & Wirth. The artist’s original drawings for the works in both shows will also be on view.

A screening of *Jump* will take place during the opening reception at David Zwirner’s downtown gallery. A catalogue of the exhibition is forthcoming. For more information, please contact the galleries at 212-727-2070 or 212-517-8677, or visit www.davidzwirner.com.