

sommer & kohl
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Paul McDevitt
A Life Without Shame

opening Friday 26 April 2013, 6–10 pm
exhibition 27 April – 7 June 2013
Wednesday–Saturday 11 am – 6 pm and by appointment

extended opening hours during the Gallery Weekend Berlin
Friday 26 April, Saturday 27 April and Sunday 28 April 2013, 11 am – 7 pm

On occasion of the Gallery Weekend Berlin Sommer & Kohl are happy to present the third solo exhibition of new works by Scottish artist Paul McDevitt (*1972).

The exhibition title is a quotation from Adam Smith and pertains to an anxious human desire for novelty and status symbols, to live “a life without shame”. To meet this need we have expanded credit and debt, so in effect these aspirations have been the engine of economic growth. Smith wrote his defining text on global capitalism, *The Wealth of Nations*, in the Scottish town of Kirkcaldy, where McDevitt has spent some time over the past couple of years. The town has been ravaged by the current recession, with smaller shops going bust and large multinationals such as McDonalds and Next opting to close their high street branches.

The artist started photographing the whitewashed windows of empty shops and these images have been incorporated in the new group of paintings which are on show at the gallery. The compositions refer to these shop windows, but also to comic book panels, suggesting some idea of narrative. The paintings are constructed much like a comic book, first pencil, then colour, then ‘inking’ using black screenprint.

The second group of works in the exhibition are from the ongoing series *Notes to Self*. For these drawings, McDevitt keeps an A4 pad of paper beside his computer at home. It is used both as a mouse mat and for taking notes. These are not particularly interesting notes, and are seldom of the kind used for research, but rather the sort of notes that need only be kept briefly and referred to once or twice. They list flight options, train times, Fed-Ex numbers, reminders to reply to an email, to return a phone call. Some of these notes are repeated on several sheets of paper for the simple reason that they are unwelcome tasks and therefore gladly delayed: filing a tax return, arranging for a doctor’s appointment, writing some text or other.

A few years ago McDevitt started to make drawings over some of these notes but soon abandoned the idea. Some time after that he tried again, incorporating the original notes into the drawings and respond to them in some way. These drawings became a regular feature of his studio practice and began to find their place in between larger projects. They became a way to think through a problem, to become unstuck. What excited the artist the most is that they felt like collaborative pieces: collaborations with an earlier, different self.

Paul McDevitt’s work has been widely exhibited internationally and is currently on view in *About Stupidity*, curated by Doreet LeVitte Harten and Diana Dallal, The Petach Tikva Art Museum, Israel. An artist’s monograph has recently been published by Kerber Verlag, Germany.

For further information and/or images please contact Sommer & Kohl.

upcoming art fairs:
Gallery Weekend Berlin, 26–28 April 2013, www.gallery-weekend-berlin.de
Frieze New York, Frame (Adrian Lohmüller), 10–13 May 2013, www.friezenewyork.com
Liste Basel, 11 – 16 June 2013, www.liste.ch

artists

eva berendes beni bischof alexandre da cunha andreas eriksson knut henrik henriksen jeroen jacobs tony just deborah ligorio adrian lohmüller paul mcdevitt riccardo previdi kara uzelman