

Noctambule

**Fondation Dosne—Bibliothèque Thiers
27, Place Saint-Georges
75009 Paris
June 24 – July 10, 2004**

Artists: David Altmejd, Matthew Brannon, Amy Globus, Matt Greene, Hanna Liden, Chloe Piene, Banks Violette, Michael Wetzel

THE EXHIBITION

Organized by D'Amelio Terras, *Noctambule* is an exhibition of young American artists presented at the Bibliothèque Thiers, an exceptional Parisian *hôtel particulier* off the beaten path of the contemporary art circuit. The artists, several of whom are included in the 2004 Whitney Biennial or have previously exhibited together, define one of the newest aspects of contemporary American art. This exhibition marks both the first time that some of them have exhibited in Europe and the first time that D'Amelio Terras will organize an exhibition of this scale in Paris.

Noctambule celebrates the emergence of a group of American artists whose practices, while formally and materially quite distinct, are nonetheless connected by an inquiry into the eerie, uncanny, dark, and unknown. Although some have been grouped under the rubric of the “Modern Gothic,” these artists focus less on the gothic’s contemporary subcultural connotations than on its *fin-de-siècle* suggestions of nocturnal transformation and otherworldliness. The title *Noctambule*, a French word for that which comes alive at night, pays homage to a nineteenth century attitude of Romantic idealism and Victorian decadence embodied in these artists’ work. This attitude is manifested in gothic iconographies and their attempts to create counternarratives in the shadow of recent economic excesses, the promises of technology, and other Western cultural utopias. Anxiety over the limits and boundaries of this progress inevitably leads to diverse investigations into the supernatural, natural forces, imaginative delusions, religious and human evil, social transgression, and spiritual corruption.

WHY PARIS?

With the current emphasis on New York, London, Los Angeles, and Berlin as preeminent contemporary art centers, new artists and trends seem to appear in real time at different points on this network. Once the center of artistic productivity, Paris has now been supplanted by other European capitals—despite its citizens’ eagerness for the newest developments in art and culture—as a chosen destination for art enthusiasts. For this reason, D'Amelio Terras has chosen Paris as the destination for this show of a new generation of American artists. The unexpected location offers a fresh perspective on these young artists’ work. The Bibliothèque Thiers, situated on Place Saint-Georges, is located in the heart of the quarter called “La Nouvelle Athènes” (the New Athens), a nineteenth century literary center. The building now houses a library dedicated to the period. The five salons on the ground floor and one grand room on the first floor sharply contrast New York’s spare exhibition spaces and offer an uncommon opportunity for

viewers to see works in an environment whose history resonates with what's on view.

ABOUT D'AMELIO TERRAS:

New York native Christopher D'Amelio and Paris-born Lucien Terras founded D'Amelio Terras in November 1996, which coincided with the emergence of Chelsea as the largest contemporary art district in the world. One of the first commercial galleries in the neighborhood, D'Amelio Terras is located on the ground floor at 525 W. 22nd St, steps from the Dia Center for the Arts.

Christopher D'Amelio began his career at the PaceWildenstein Gallery and Lucien Terras, prior to his arrival in New York, worked in Paris at the Fondation Cartier pour L'Art Contemporain and Galerie Yvon Lambert. The two worked together as directors of Paula Cooper Gallery from 1992 to 1996.

Currently D'Amelio Terras represents established artists with international reputations, including Polly Apfelbaum, Delia Brown, Tony Feher, Glenn Ligon, Cornelia Parker, Karin Sander and Yoshihiro Suda. In addition to fostering their careers and those of younger, emerging artists, the gallery has maintained a nontraditional program throughout its seven-year history, borrowing artworks from museums to display in historical exhibitions centered on specific themes and even inviting smaller galleries to showcase their programs in the D'Amelio Terras space. *Noctambule* continues this nontraditional attitude: the exhibition is organized in New York for a Parisian space not normally associated with contemporary art and will present artists not affiliated with the gallery. With *Noctambule*, D'Amelio Terras brings the vibrancy of this specific New York moment to Paris's European audience.

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