

POSTMASTERS

postmasters 459 w 19 street nyc 10011 212 727 3323

fax 212 229 2829

postmasters@thing.net

for immediate release:

march 5 - april 2, 2005

DIANA COOPER

Swarm

opening reception: saturday, march 5, 6-8 pm

"Swarm," an exhibition of new works by Diana Cooper will be on view from March 5 until April 2, 2005. This will be Cooper's fourth solo exhibition at Postmasters, her first after a year-long residency at the American Academy in Rome in 2003/2004.

Sometimes I feel as though I am making flowcharts for an imaginary world. My mind is like a filter constantly translating the world around me. Everything catches my eye: bright orange traffic cones meandering between the street and the sidewalk; an enormous building sheathed in black mesh from top to bottom; duct tape adhering a handwritten sign to a newly polished subway tiled wall. These are all urban works in progress, part of the transitory, the ephemeral, and the makeshift. These are the environments we inhabit everyday.

Diana Cooper's works cannot be easily categorized; she engages in a unique practice that combines drawing, painting, sculpture and installation. Although essentially abstract, these unabashedly handmade visual hybrids suggest a narrative of cause and effect in which apparent chaos and randomness develops inherent logic, or conversely, orderly structures turn paradoxical.

Digital, biological and medical systems are our life support but they can fail us too. In their complexity they become unstable and fragile. I am interested in how you can start with a logical structure and through sheer repetition and excess create something that unravels and stops making sense. Fragility is important to me because it underscores our own vulnerability. Like the makeshift improvisations on existing systems my work is fragile and grows organically

Cooper's works are made from unorthodox but commonly available materials, such as foam core, felt, corrugated plastic sheeting, numbered map pins, acetate, Velcro, neoprene and pom poms. They incorporate her own photographs as building elements - a development inspired in part by the elaborate instruction manuals that she has been making since 1998 to accompany her installations.

I want to transform materials and insinuate them into unlikely contexts. I want to create the sense that they don't quite belong but at the same time that they do. Often I like to make something be what it shouldn't be: scotch tape holds up a felt construction, plastic and pipe cleaners frame a heap of pom poms or a delicate felt-tip marker doodle covers an enormous canvas. I want the work to be both vital and vulnerable, like an ice cream cake in the sun.

Two new works included in this show, "Orange Alert (USA)" 2004-05 and "Swarm" 2003-05 make specific reference to real world events. "Orange Alert (USA)" refers to the US terror alert color code instated by the Bush administration after September 11, 2001. In "Swarm," one of the central free-standing structures were partly inspired by US barriers used during political protests in 2003.

In a recent review of Cooper's work in the Los Angeles Times, Christopher Knight wrote:

"Think of Diana Cooper's wall reliefs as visualization of the way a computer virus might work: Havoc occurs through precise channels of organization, manic energy merges with exacting control and data seem to wobble between ferocious and benign. The structure of her art is a hybrid of machine regularity and human caprice. In fact, maybe this is also what logic looks like - carefully composed yet far messier and more random than we assume."

(January 21, 2005)

Diana Cooper's works have been shown extensively in Europe and the US. In 2003-04 she was a recipient of the Rome Prize as well as an artist-in-resident at the Center for Drawing at the Wimbledon School of Art. She has recently had solo shows at the Center for Drawing in London and at the Carl Berg Gallery in Los Angeles. She has participated in group shows at the Museum St. Gallen in Switzerland, the Drawing Room in London and the Brooklyn Museum. In addition, she has shown at Hales Gallery in London, Galerie Anne de Villepoix in Paris and Galerie Staub in Zurich. In the United States Cooper has exhibited at P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center and Sculpture Center in New York, Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati, Tang Museum at Skidmore College, New York, Rice University Art Gallery in Houston and numerous other institutions.

* * * * *

*Postmasters Gallery, located in Chelsea at 459 West 19th Street (corner of 10th Avenue),
is open Tuesday through Saturday 11am to 6 pm.
Please contact Magdalena Sawon with any questions or requests.*

**www.postmastersart.com
postmasters@thing.net or magda@thing.net**

(the exhibition images will be posted online by March 7)