



KLAUS VON NICHTSSAGEND GALLERY

Glen Baldrige, '6SD60RTb.jpg' (2007).

GLEN BALDRIDGE: It Took Several Lies

*Klaus von Nichtssagend
Gallery*

If the esteem in which contemporary printmaking is held ever returns to the level it enjoyed during its revival in the 1960s and '70s, it will be because of innovative, open-minded outfits like Forth Estate. Glen Baldrige cofounded Forth Estate (with master printer Luther Davis) in 2005, and his second solo show is on view at the diminutive but always lively Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery in Williamsburg. In recent years, the pendulum of taste for works on paper has swung to the "original" end of the spectrum, with drawing in its various forms commanding collectors' attention. The materially elaborate objects Mr. Baldrige makes span this divide, and the artist's imagery is aided

rather than encumbered by his interest in technique.

"Here Come the Miracles" (all works 2007) was co-published by Forth Estate and the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop. Against a background of vertical stripes in agreeable decorator colors, a symmetrical, geometric pair of oncoming fists greets the viewer. Pinkish, horizontal rectangles tucked beneath four contiguous vertical ones, they read "OKAY FINE" between the knuckles, in Gothic lettering, as if tattooed. It is an "intaglio wiped relief printed woodcut," meaning that the printing surface — made of 64 individual blocks — was meticulously inked in such a way that various colors were deposited both in the crevasses of the wood blocks, and on their uppermost surface. No wonder that this technically demanding edition is limited to 10.

Two 43-by-44-inch drawings in acrylic and graphite were executed using a tattoo needle. Prominently

placed phrases ("NEVER FORGIVE," "NEVER EVER"), in backwards letters made of pretty, smeared little flowers, are wanly ominous. And ghostly hordes of tree trunks assemble under black skies in five drawing/silkscreen hybrids derived from photos of burned-out or wintry forests. Their titles look like file names. "6SD60RTb.jpg" is typical; on a sheet coated with powdered graphite, the artist screened his low-resolution image in colorless acrylic medium, turning the graphite velvety and binding it to the paper. An eraser was then worked over the surface, establishing pale areas by removing loose graphite; their vagaries resemble degraded photographic emulsion. These works are not editioned, and each is uniquely, bleakly beautiful.

Stephen Maine

Until June 10 (438 Union Ave. at Metropolitan Avenue, Brooklyn, 718-383-7309).