

Press release

TOBIAS ZIELONY

THE HIDDEN

**Opening Wednesday February 14, 7.00 p.m.
Lia Rumma Gallery, Milan**

The Lia Rumma Gallery in Milan is pleased to present *The Hidden*, the first personal exhibition to be held in Italy by the young German photographer Tobias Zielony.

The title of the exhibition refers to the latest series of photographs taken by Zielony in the outskirts of Los Angeles. As its title suggests, *The Hidden* is designed to highlight a social reality that is hidden and usually situated on the margins of large urban centres. The starting point for all Zielony's photos is his investigation of the city suburbs and the images display interesting combinations of architecture and portraits. The young faces captured by the artist's lens often have vacant or evasive expressions and reveal the delicate dynamics of adolescence: unease, isolation, disorientation, the herd mentality and the desire to belong to a group. In other cases, architecture is the sole protagonist of the photos. Nevertheless, these images prove to be complementary to the series of portraits and conclude an investigation that appears quite unambiguous. The artist's interest in the urban landscape is not linked so much to its aesthetic potential as to its value as a "habitat". This relates to the context, the place in which the protagonists of the photographs interact, which enables us to add the details that are missing from their hidden stories.

The exhibition also contains a selection of slides projected onto a wall showing some of the artist's most famous works, grouped under the title *Behind the Block*. These images were taken in various places from Bristol to Marseilles and other towns and cities in East Germany.

By comparing the recent photos taken in the United States with the previous ones taken in various European cities, the artist traces a red line that links situations which, despite being extremely different from a social and cultural perspective, share similar dynamics.

Tobias Zielony was born in 1973 at Wuppertal in West Germany and studied at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst in Leipzig. In 2006 he was awarded a study grant and moved to the United States. He currently lives and works in New York.

Among the various recent exhibitions of his work, we would highlight the two personal exhibitions organised in 2006 at the Kunsthhaus in Glarus (Switzerland) and the Centre de la Photographie in Geneva, the travelling exhibition *Populism* of 2005, presented at the Centre for Contemporary Arts in Vilnius, the Museum for Architecture, Art and Design at Oslo, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and the Kunstverein in Frankfurt and the collective exhibition of 2006 *Street: behind the cliché*, held at the Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art in Rotterdam.