



FRIEDRICH KUNATH, *Untitled*, 2006. Silkscreen print, watercolor on canvas, 200 x 300 cm. Courtesy Blum & Poe, Los Angeles and BQ, Cologne. Photo: Joshua White.

FRIEDRICH KUNATH

BLUM & POE

Friedrich Kunath's exhibition, ironically titled "I have always been here before," describes a complicated and oddly idiosyncratic version of the world. Sculpture and painting are fused into wonderfully inventive combinations, as Kunath engages us in a simultaneously personal and political reverie, a visual treatise on the state of the world inside and out.

The strongest works in the show are the sculptures, which constitute both a floor piece made from cut pieces of carpet that reference a grid of all the countries in Europe, each distinguished by color, and a strangely comical stuffed crane walking on stilt-like legs across the gallery floor in a pair of oversized men's loafers. The bird leaves behind a trail of white footprints as it meanders in the direction of a diminutive, nearly suicidal birdhouse (any bird who went inside would surely find it difficult to reemerge) hung on the opposite wall and sporting an impossibly long ladder. The sense of the ridiculous is palpable here, and is in fact the quality that makes Kunath's work both so inviting and so oddly disturbing.

The painting *Untitled* is also very powerful; it shows a man holding up the side of a house with all his strength. This image might serve as a visual dictum for our time, one of hope and hopelessness, an impossible dream made real and falling in on the man who created it. Finally, Kunath is an artist whose work describes the personal machinations and concerns of his imagination as he, like us all, careens through life, intent on bridging the distance between himself and the world.

Eve Wood