

Ben Kruisdijk + Katrin Ströbel "SGNIWARD/SNGIS"

Opening Friday, May 1st, 6-9 pm

Duration May 1st - June 13th 2009

The two artists in the exhibition "sgniward/sngis" Katrin Ströbel (born 1975 in Pforzheim, Germany) and Ben Kruisdijk (born 1981 in Zaandam, the Netherlands) deal with the variety of language systems and their subjective meanings and interpretations. By combining several existing sign systems, they create in their work a new language which shows the width of interpretation possibilities.

Katrin Ströbel uses the variety of signs which can be found in the cityscape. She analyses the graffiti on walls and captures it in scheme-like drafts on paper. In her collages, graffiti from various countries and cultures merge into one another. In this way, arabic signs stand next to the classic graffiti-balloon-writing style, two dimensional next to three dimensional signs and clearly readable words are followed by hieroglyph-like or blurred lettering. Through this abstract though unified way of working, floral or labyrinth-like carpets arise and hover over walls and ceilings. These cultural superimpositions are also thematized in her series "Marabou", where flyers from fortunetellers and life-advisors, with which people from other cultures at airports should be trussed, are collected and processed. The clash of different language and religious systems are the focus of her interest and the inspiration behind this project.

Ben Kruisdijk's language system is more of a scientific kind. In his series "etched x-ray drawings" he uses x rays and combines these with analysed drawings from biology. In this way, a skeleton of a hand grasps a flower suggesting the meeting of life and death. Kruisdijk also refers to fantasy, which can become reality through the human being. Things that seem to be real or scientifically proven, could also just be a connection of realities which seem real when they come together like this. Also, the connection of mathematic discoveries with scientific phenomenons are referenced. In his drawings, the yellow paper with cursive handwritten titles seem like imitations of the earliest ways of documenting research results.

Both artists use a palimpsest-like technique by wiping out their analysis and overwriting it; a way to show the scientific process. Because of this approach, the specific drawing systems that Kruisdijk and Ströbel have integrated in their drawings, can only be recognized through a precise observation.

text by Ilka Tödt

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