



No Matter How Bright the Light, the Crossing Occurs at Night

Main Hall + Ground Floor

This collaboratively developed exhibition features works by Natascha Sadr Haghighian, Judith Hopf and Deborah Schamoni, and Ines Schaber, all addressing themselves to various aspects of the spectral. It is less a case of rendering specters visible than a question about the circumstances of disappearance and invisibility – in other words, the relationships brought forth by the specter, the withdrawal of the status of reality, and the conditions for transformation: the spectral destabilizes given relationships between real and unreal, present and absent. *No Matter How Bright the Light, the Crossing Occurs at Night* is also an exhibition about the specters of art: the phantom power to represent all, mediation as conjuration and banishment, animated bodies, subjective prostheses, and the “impossible” necessity of a realism of the specter, a realism of absence.

Ines Schaber speculates on a latent activity within the photograph and its ability to travel through space and time. Using photographs of Pennsylvania workers as her base, she follows images from a series taken for the National Child Labor Committee in the 1910s by Lewis Hine, a pioneer of social documentary photography. These images become the point of departure for a trip through today's hardly recognizable mining country landscape. There, stored in a former limestone mine, exists one of today's largest commercial image archives, Bill Gates' firm *Corbis*, which offers over 70 million images for sale online, including some from Hine's series. The overlap of these two moments poses questions for photography as the agent of something that is able to travel, multiply itself, appear in various places, and speak with its surroundings.

Judith Hopf works with the specters of bourgeois society. How do the attempt to control, the defense against pathological anxieties, and - following from these – the ideology of complete transparency, inscribe themselves on the body and on the faculty of imagination? Apart of her installation, a new videowork, developed and realized with filmmaker Deborah Schamoni will be shown in the exhibition. The video deals with the representation of specters in the institutional space. Therefore they do not investigate the presence or absence of the spectral as search for a usable ritual or codex of form that would make it possible to assign places to specters as representatives of the repressed in which they might yet remain visible.

Natascha Sadr Haghighian investigates with Stefan Pente in various collaborations societal constructions of inclusion and exclusion. How it is decided when someone will be granted member status in a “civilized community”? When is someone perceived as present and addressable through its voice, image, and concerns? How does one lose this status and when is it withdrawn? In the consideration of various societal dynamics and representation schemes, it becomes clear that the construction of the status of the “person” and the associated rights themselves produce exclusion. Who possesses this status and why do others fall outside of it? If you are not a person, then what are you? The mechanisms of presence and absence are questioned in conversations and installations.

Along with the exhibition will appear a 220-page book published by Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Köln, with contributions and dialogues by and with Ines Schaber, Natascha Sadr Haghghian, Stefan Pente, and Judith Hopf, as well as Avery F. Gordon, Anselm Franke, Nicolas Siepen, Sladja Blazan, Thomas Keenan, and Michael Taussig.

Curated by Anselm Franke.

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Opening: September 2, 2006, 5 - 9 pm

Dates: September 3 – November 12, 2006

Further Information:

Markus Müller | Maike Cruse T. 0049 [30] 2434 59 41/42 press@kw-berlin.de www.kw-berlin.de