

Ketuta Alexi-Meskhishvili

*Boiled Language*

12.10.2020 - 20. 12.2020

LC Queisser is pleased to present *Boiled Language*, a solo exhibition of new works by Berlin-based artist Ketuta Alexi-Meskhishvili.

In this new group of works, Alexi-Meskhishvili examines the space of translation, what lies between an image and its referent, one language and another, and how a photograph can transmit the immersive instability of what lies outside of reason. Challenging traditional notions of photography as impersonal, or documentarian, this new group of works look at the capacity for an image to refer to the immaterial, the personal, and the direct.

In *Georgian Ornament* and *Vines*, Alexi-Meskhishvili builds the images by first making photograms on large format negatives, a technique that appears in many pieces in the exhibition. These two works are made by pressing plastic bags from tourist shops in Old Tbilisi onto the negative directly and exposing it to light. The motifs printed on these bags are traditional Georgian decorative designs. When printed on the bags, the traditional patterns transform into an isolated logo, a symbol operating as a referent for something else. The resulting images are ethereal, the designs seeming to float in a haze of effervescent color. It's not clear how these images are made, or what object was used to make this impression on the negative. There is a distance between the image and the object referred to that expands into a space beyond clear cut analogy.

In *I Am Your Slice* and *Danama*, Alexi-Meskhishvili manipulates the large format negative directly through folds and scratches. Here, the impression made on the negative is done directly by the artist's hand. The referent is not an object, but an action, and the resulting image is not a depiction of the action, but instead the residue of it. The distance between photograph and subject widens even further here, pulling us into a space that doesn't operate within the regimented logics of language or documentary.

By divorcing the image from its source and letting the space between them widen, Alexi-Meskhishvili encourages the photos to exceed time expectations, to enter a wilder terrain. Like the Cheshire Cat, the Wonderland guide whose smile floats hauntingly as his body disappears, the smile in *Dog Smile* is our guide into an illogical photography. This remaining representational vestige leads us into a space detached from reason, walks us into the moments in translation in which excesses make themselves known and reveal a landscape rich in immersive chaos and dynamic possibility.

-Marina Caron