

Juliette Blightman, Dirk Bell
Paradise Lost
Kunstverein Arnsberg
October 1 – November 15, 2010

Press Release

The interdisciplinary work of Dirk Bell deals with the central themes of freedom and love, innocence and passion. In Kunstverein Arnsberg, Bell presents a new series of drawings and paintings, arising from a longing for a lost and no longer accessible paradise. His motives for the exhibition 'Lost' are based on pictures and stories of the photographer Richard Hamilton, and a travel book on Bali. These motives are saturated in nature and the erotic, in vivid colour. But this is no dream world - the dangers of sin lurk in the background. The true legend is born in the moment of observation, the beauty of the images revealed in their drama. A Balinese legend (and one of Bell's pictures) describes the separation of the soul from the sleeping body. In the separation of body and soul, dream and reality, a gap forms; a tension, space, or outer space, where we must sometimes lose ourselves in order to find ourselves anew.

With restrained interventions and installations, the English artist Juliette Blightman focuses and sharpens our perspective on everyday situations. Her works are sensitive observations of our environment, which allow us a different kind of access to daily life. In Kunstverein Arnsberg, she presents a selection of texts originating from John Milton's poem 'Paradise Lost'. The text fragments relate to the works of Dirk Bell and provide titles to his paintings. Words and images meet as two worlds in the observer's mind, melting together with their own individual experiences. Blightmann's approach to apparent invisibility is newly embodied in her other work in the exhibition, a ceiling fan which attempts to set the invisible in motion. Blightmann's works move at the border of an easily overseen existence: Her ephemeral interventions guide our attention, and basic reality is rediscovered in its diversity and tension.

The title of the exhibition refers to the epic poem 'Paradise Lost', written in 1667 by the English poet John Milton. The poem tells the tale of the descent into hell of the fallen angel, Satan's tempting of Adam and Eve, and their fall from grace and expulsion from the garden of Eden.