

“MICHELANGELO”

Anne Schmidt

7 February - 14 March 2020
Vin Vin Gallery, Vienna

Is Anne Schmidt fake? It is certain that there is an artistic persona which operates under this name, but various others have already been tested. There is evidence of Anne Schmidt left on the gallery's wall, a hole - from when she bumped into the premises through its intriguing doorway (entering feels like squeezing oneself through a small hole, don't you think?). The outcome reminds the contemporary spectator of Adam Driver in "Marriage Story", who in rage punches a hole into the wall of his new single dad apartment. Behind the hole is – nothing. The seemingly fragile American wall structure appears as a fake to the North European viewer, like as if the stage design has just been destroyed. A reversed way of breaking the fourth wall through breaking the back wall? We are in this annoying divorce together now. In the case of the gallery the hole appears as a trace, the legacy of the artist who, at least once, has been present.

Anne Schmidt hung one of her works on the ceiling, where it appears as a backdrop for celestial representation. Maybe a hint of what the afterlife may look like? She mainly thought of the Sistine Chapel and Michelangelo (with whom she is in constant competition), when she fit the work into the vault. The painted columns, architraves and artificial pedestals in the Vatican City simultaneously create a feeling of spatial protection and rampant mobility through its final rooflessness. But on whichever surface, painting is the traditional medium for optical illusion. Whereby its effects are not only used to show off technical virtuosity, but also to mediate hidden agendas. The shattered frame glass in *Trompe-l'œil*, 1801 by Laurent Dabos for example is not only a deception of the eyes, too tenderly lies the sharp blade of the glass splinter against Napoleon Bonaparte's throat. Same as with the distorted skull in Hans Holbein the Younger's *The Ambassadors*, 1533, which only becomes recognizable by the guest when leaving the room, sending him off with the hint of a threat.

Regarding the surface of her own work, Anne Schmidt makes us think the fabric she paints on is real silk. Just another willful manipulation.

In case you wondered, Anne Schmidt made herself a part of Nicole Wermer's fictive all-female motorcycle gang and therefore created her very own robe. Fake it till you make it! And there is another artist she pays tribute to: Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes. He himself a man of many references, became famous through "Los caprichos", 1797-1799. The title could stand for many things: mood, invasion, woolly thoughts (that make your hair stand on end) or goat (the aimless leaps of imagination). Goya was only one of many men of his time, who had fallen in love with the feisty duchess of Alba. He self-confidently painted her showing him a proof of love: imperiously the Duchess points to the letters written in the sand to her feet "Solo Goya". But Anne Schmidt's "Signature Piece" is not only a reference to Goya, it also appears as a recourse to other architectural fragments and the artificial pedestals and painted columns mentioned above, or simply as a fake marshmallow: seductive.

Pia-Marie Remmers

**Vin Vin Gallery – Hintzerstrasse 4/1 – 1030 Vienna – Opening hours: Wednesday – Thursday – Friday
12:00 – 18:00, Saturday 12:00 – 16:00 Phone number: +43 699 112 096 24 – mail@vinvin.eu –
www.vinvin.eu**