

Chantal Crousel is pleased to present the first solo exhibition of Isa Genzken at the gallery. The exhibition is composed of a series of paintings, collages and sculptures, created for Paris.

Under the unambiguous title “Mona Isa,” the artist brings to the foreground a number of iconic personalities from the history of art, in particular from the Renaissance: da Vinci, Caravaggio, as well as Dürer. By introducing them next to portraits of herself and to her images of the contemporary world, she challenges them and propulses them into our time, next to Michael Jackson and other seminal figures of a society that - after all - has not evolved that much.

Isa Genzken uses a huge variety of materials, media and technologies. Her works take very varied shapes : columns and sculptures, paintings, collages, or installations. All these “settings” express her relationship with individuals, spaces and architectural structures that surround her, and translate her social, cultural and personal implications. Although she draws on - sophisticated - contemporary materials, Isa Genzken’s works keep an artisanal dimension. They elicit a physical and mental engagement of the viewer.

Thus, the “Hotel,” “Harfe,” “Ambulance,” “Nofretete,” “Bibliothek,” 2010, a selection of seats as recognizable symbols of a universal life-style, erected as sculptures on pedestals, whose indissoluble architecture - sculpture - body relationship acquires intimate, private connotations. As well as the “Lautsprecher” ... empty suspended pedestals, that have become captors or senders in the expectation of sounds.

Under the title “Soziale Fassade” (Social Facade), the collaged paintings express the close bond between architecture and human behaviour in the broadest sense. The facades of buildings in modern cities do not let us glimpse inside, but actually act as mirrors of their surroundings, constantly changing their image according to the viewer’s viewpoint. They are thus spaces that forge and spark off relations.

And not to take it so seriously, “Mona Isa III (Elefant),” 2010, a grey elephant - a sad and tired big animal - enters the exhibition through a hidden window.

Isa Genzken was the subject of a major retrospective in 2009, jointly organized by the Museum Ludwig, Cologne and the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London. She represented Germany at the Venice Biennale in 2007, and other notable solo exhibitions in the past decade include Malmö Konsthall, Sweden (2008); the Camden Arts Centre, London (2006); the Photographers Gallery, London (2005); the Kunsthalle Zürich (2003); and the Städtliche Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau,

Munich (2003). Her work is included in the collections of many prominent institutions internationally, including the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; the Generali Foundation, Vienna; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; the Museum Ludwig, Cologne; and the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven

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