

KUNSTVEREIN GARTENHAUS

26 Januar – 16 März 2024

CHANTAL KAUFMANN Real as compared to what

Full Stop. Colon. Semi colon.

Interruptions and punctuations are an invitation to linger on what is subjective and destroy what is tender. Start again, take out a frame, repeat it and juxtapose with something else. The gaze is an imperfect machine that can devise significance.

Chantal Kaufmann's cinematic practice plays with discontinuity and interruption to unveil the connections between image and language and their joint production of meaning between author and recipient. In her work subjectivity is challenged by the presence of haunting images appearing and disappearing: a glimpse or a fragment is cut, reproduced and recontextualised. It is nevertheless the repetition of this glitch that opens up understandings.

Conceived uniquely for the spaces of KUNSTVEREIN GARTENHAUS, *Real as compared to what* comprises a new film and a series of screen prints, photograms and a window intervention newly produced by Kaufmann on the occasion of the show. Working mainly with short length format, often characterized by immersive sound composed by friends and collaborators, her fast-paced films linger between cinematic and textual montage, allowing for multiple interpretations and readings. At times we wonder if what we see in the films was something we also lived, if we were also present or what we are looking at is just someone else's memory. As in a cognitive *deja-vu*, this sense of familiarity stops us from willing to scrutinize the individual image sequences for discernible meanings, but rather encourages an appreciation of the inherent flow of colors, driving, aquariums, radio playing pop songs and voice-overs. Often declining what she records on camera on different formats such as screen printing whilst playing with visual codes and genres, still images are cropped and expanded via painterly gestures. Standing syntactically as paragraphs, each of these images tend to melt into abstraction subverting a possible view of the world.

In a similar logic the photograms, obtained by the impression of letters onto photographic paper, are an attempt to deconstruct the tight bond between language and meaning while affecting their reception. By physically composing and decomposing possible arrangements she exposes the fragility of the infrastructures that define us whilst disrupting the infinite representational flow.

To enhance this process even more, the artist covers half of the gallery windows with hand-applied printed paper that obscures the view from the street into the space and vice-versa. Enveloping the space in black cheap-printed paper with the letter X scattered across the windows, she poses a gesture of negation. Repurposing this act of defiance, typical of self-organised groups, the installation unlatches refusal as a power tool towards the construction of meanings. Kaufmann's practice destabilizes by advancing irritation, fragility and ambiguity as the starting point for a possible political action in art.

Real as compared to what?

KUNSTVEREIN GARTENHAUS

List of works

X, 2024

Paper, inkjet print, paste
dimensions variable

Basil I, 2024

Acrylics and Screenprint on Canvas
120 x 170 cm

Isabel, 2024

Acrylics and Screenprint on Canvas
120 x 170 cm

Basil II & III, 2024

Acrylics and Screenprint on Canvas
120 x 170 cm

The Bigger Picture, 2024

Inkjet print on paper, tape
11,3 cm x 5 cm

One, two, three, four, five, six, 2024

3' channel video, sound
8:07 min.

All night they sleep / worn out and tough 1, 2024

Photogram
13 x 18 cm

Big A Little a, 2022

Photogram
Courtesy to the Artist and Galerie Kirchgasse
33.9 x 28.3 cm (framed)

Chantal Kaufmann

Chantal Kaufmann (1984, Lucerne, Switzerland) lives and works in Zürich and Vienna. Kaufmann holds a BA in Fine Arts at the Zurich University of the Arts (2012 — 2015) and a Master in Critical Studies (MA) at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2017 — 2022). Kaufmann's practice is dedicated to the connections between image and language and their joint production of meaning between author and recipient. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Milieu*, Bern (2023); *Galerie Kirchgasse*, Steckborn (2023); *Oxford*, Berlin (2022), and *Longtang*, Zürich (2019) amongst others. Her video work was shown and screened at *DOCK20* Lustenau, Lustenau (2023); *Viennale Filmfestival*, Vienna (2022); *MUMOK* Cinema, Vienna, (2018) and has been included in group exhibitions at *Kunsthalle Bern*, Bern (2022); *Little*, Bern (2021); *Weiss Falk*, Basel (2020); *Museum im Bellpark*, Kriens (2019); *Riverside*, Bern (2019); *BIG*, Geneva (2017) and *Kunsthalle Zürich*, Zürich (2016) amongst others. She also ran the independent spaces *UP STATE*, Zurich (2014 — 2018) together with Marc Hunziker and Rafal Skoczek and *Shoefrog*, Vienna (2019 — 2020) with Parastu Gharabaghi and Demian Kern.

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