

LORNA MACINTYRE A TREE OF NIGHT

OPENING FRIDAY, 11 MARCH 2011, 6PM - 9PM

EXHIBITION DATES 12 MARCH – 16 APRIL 2011

A Tree of Night, the title of Lorna Macintyre's show at Galerie Kamm is taken from Truman Capote's collection of early short stories, characterized by their dark psychological themes and an ornate style of writing. Alluding to the style of these uncanny stories Lorna Macintyre's works deal with the darker side of nature, both beautiful and threatening at the same time. Including elements of nature like the night, lit up only by the stars, the shadows of trees or the water of the sea, stirred up by a storm, these works form a web of references which creates an atmosphere of sublime beauty.

In the work *Untitled (Night Sky)* the artist stripped the paint off the back of a mirror and burned marks into the silver layer with bleach. The viewer can see his own reflection in the mirror, but at the same time the burns in the silver layer of the mirror suggest a reversed image of stars in the night. The result is a duality of the reflection of the present moment and a sensation of infinity, which is also mirrored in another work. In *Untitled* such marks dominate a huge mirror placed on the ground of the main exhibition room mimicking the waters of a seemingly fathomless sea.

Picking up this motif the cyanotype *Vertigo* shows images of stairs leading to a stormy sea and shadowed by a tree, that are taken at four different moments in time. They are arranged symmetrically beside each other and unified by a gestural central mark to form an emblematic appearance that suggests a crystal or a totem. On one hand the stairs can be seen as a metaphor of transcendence here, yet this composition forms an abstract whole that takes the work away from a mere reproduction of reality.

As another connecting aspect in the works the waving forms of the over exposed and solarised photographs of *The Sea*, *The Sea* relate to the gestural, fluid marks of the work *A Tree of Night*. In this Lorna Macintyre uses the decalcomania technique to introduce chance into the artistic process.

A photograph and a contact print are folded together with a big splash of gouache and ink in between them. Opened again, both images are covered with a swirling form of colour echoing the movement of the waves and depicting tree-like forms. Both parts of the work picture the same process of mark making, one being the inverted image of the other. This layering of materials and motifs can also be found in the photogram *In Dark Trees* where two separate photographic processes turn the work into an abstract image that cannot be decoded anymore.

Looking at the technical aspects of all the works the paraphernalia of this show are materials like metal, silver, glass, wood and paper and all kinds of fluids like black spray paint, gouache or chemicals to manipulate these materials in a gestural form of mark making. In a working process that is often based on chance these materials are layered to form a hierarchic composition which could be seen as an allusion to Sigmund Freud's system of the conscious mind, the preconscious, and the unconscious mind lying beneath each other.

Coming back to the motifs of dark nature the philosophical concept of the sublime on the other hand implies the sensation of pain with an inherent pleasure. The feeling of exposure to an uncontrollable side of nature can create an emotion that goes beyond the effects of beauty, beyond aesthetics into a realm of a more profound experience.

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