

ANNETTE RUENZLER FAIRE LA BISE

OPENING FRIDAY, 1 MARCH 2013, 6 – 9 PM

EXHIBITION 2 MARCH – 13 APRIL 2013, TUE – SAT 11AM – 6PM

To 'make a kiss' is an ambiguous gesture - a brief exchange that marks an interaction however fleeting, a breath of air in coming and going, a kiss offered often without kissing at all. 'La bise' represents a curious sort of embodied ephemerality. Annette Ruenzler's second solo show at Galerie Kamm takes this immaterial yet ritualized action as its title, materializing the gesture's literal meaning of making a breeze ("einen Lufthauch") in sculptural and photographic works which teeter between presence and absence.

In a small color photograph, an indefinable shape hovers like a strange apparition against a blue-green gridded ground. The fact that its bulbous edges glimmer like lucky stars sets up a stark contrast with the grid, hinting at the mutability of its morphology relative to its surroundings. In fact, the mysterious form is a shadow cast by a leaf that has fallen on water's surface: its lifeless form transfigured by a play of light and shade into an transient image imbued with a life-like second nature. This subtle play that shifts object to subject, life-less to lively reappears throughout the exhibition, as in a group of three vases that rest on shelves in front of a mirror (*kleine Gruppe*, 2013). The vases appear to have been squashed. Their round forms flattened irregularly. Yet upon closer inspection, this is not a *détournement* of readymade objects. Instead, the sculpture is made from ceramic casts of vases whose shapes have been manipulated (deformed) during the process of their formation. As ghosts of absent objects, these hand-made replicas paradoxically take on a new life as an anthropomorphic gathering: their forms, fired-hard, undulate as though they were alive. Imbued with these life-like characteristics, the ensemble plays with the projections and attachments the viewer might affix to seemingly banal, domestic objects. In literally reflecting these projections back through the mirror, the viewer's own expectations become the evocative object of interrogation.

The viewer is similarly implicated in a larger installation comprised of light bulbs that dangle from the ceiling over drinking glasses distributed on the gallery floor. Shining through the glasses' decorative grooves, the lamps create ephemeral constellations of light and shadow. Like the floating leaf, or the glance in the mirror, this installation transforms the quotidian into a fleeting play of immaterial effects, breathing life into the inanimate. This new life is predicated upon the viewer's own motions which cause the projections to quiver gently such that the movement generates a reciprocal perceptual fluctuation. In *Vase 1* (2012/13), Ruenzler has re/de-purposed yet another vase by making large holes in its sides. The holes preclude the possibility of filling the vase with water and flowers- themselves clipped from life in order to be presented in as a second, interiorized and domesticated nature. This empty container-which-cannot-contain instead now holds the recorded sounds of a bird's song, which plays through a set of headphones hanging on the vase.

Emptiness discloses the possibility of presence and vice versa. The seeming fixity of the everyday dematerializes into a suite of contingent impressions that shift with each whiff of breath.