

It is with great excitement that Simone Subal Gallery announces the opening of Erika Vogt's *The Engraved Plane* on Wednesday, May 2, 2012. This is Vogt's first solo show in New York, which runs until June 10, 2012.

In *The Engraved Plane*, Vogt works in video, sculpture, and drawing to create a floating iconography that is as much about entering a physical plane as an imaginary one. This quality of moving and mutable signs forms the basis of her conceptually complex work. Vogt strives to create an environment in which the viewer is able to move freely, creating an experience predicated upon associations, layers, and contingencies. As with her previous exhibitions, Vogt conjoins the literary and philosophical in order to create phenomenological investigation into things, their use, and our complicated and contradictory relationship to them.

Vogt's videos are visually dense with alternating objects, drawings, performers, and grounds. Employing both analog and digital image-making techniques, she often positions her subjects in between these complex layers. She combines live-action film shots with digital animations of drawings or elements and forms from drawings in the exhibition. One sees individuals engaged with various objects: a man reading a book or a hand carrying a peculiar form. The manipulation of these objects gives a sense that they were recently discovered. They also suggest an attempt to discover the limits of a form and any sort of latent potential within the thing. These gestures are superimposed with layers that take the drawings as a starting point, involving flickering colors, non-Euclidian geometric forms, and optical disorientation. The actions become filled with meaning, and lend both a scientific as well as a mystical air to the films. It is as if Vogt uses science to discover the transcendental, and, conversely, the spiritual to establish material facts.

Vogt's drawings are similar in constitution and subject matter to the videos. Some, like the series *Notes on Currency*, use a "spirit duplicator" mimeograph machine to create images that have a hallucinatory effect, making the depicted object seem untethered to any pictorial ground. These drawings engage abstractly with systems of exchanges: the value of a certain tool, its reciprocity with another form, its function in relation to something else, etc. These themes continue in the other drawings, several of them quite large in scale. Such works are fictional, depicting contested worlds in which images of queens, sea monsters, and architectural remnants interact in many different ways. For Vogt, these pieces are explorations into narrative structure; narrative not as a linear progression from beginning to end, but narrative as a total experience that even includes moments of miscomprehension.

Vogt arranges groups of sculptures throughout the space, reiterating the vocabulary present in the

videos and drawings. These sculptures invite tactile engagement, and derive their form both from found objects as well as invented ones. There are, for example, knobs, a jig, a window sash, wood scraps, a guide, and some musical instruments. The gestures implied by the handling of these objects—the turning of the knobs, the measuring with the jig—become important component of the works. The Guide, for instance, a roughly 100 inches by 1 inch structure with handles on each end, is meant to be handled by two people. One person “leads” the other, as they carve a line through The Engraved Plane. Viewers are allowed to handle the sculptures when looking at the show.

Vogt conceived the works in The Engraved Plane in close relation to the grouping Grounds and Airs that will be featured in the first Los Angeles biennial, Made in LA, at the Hammer Museum from June 2, 2012 – September 2, 2012.

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