

## **KATHARINA JAHNKE because it is there**

In her project "because it is there", Katharina Jahnke aims at mechanisms of fear, as much as its functionalisation in society, where the manipulation of perception is used as an economic-political factor. With an installation of sculptures, banners, and drawings, Katharina Jahnke's project describes this thematic complex by combining quotations and images.

"because it is there", the leitmotif of the project presented on a banner, is a quotation which originally entered history as George Leigh-Mallory's answer to the question why he wanted to climb Mount Everest. The sentence, as an assertion, concurrently establishes an action which has no particular sense or use. Removed from the original story, the sentence can be read, positively or negatively, as a metaphor for the perception process and its subsequent consequences. The banner, normally the classical support for simple, readable content, here, declines this task, by failing to give us a plain message. What is there, where is it, and what does it being there, mean? That evil and dread is everywhere, we already know through horror films, among other things. A second banner carries a list of horror-film titles, which are sewn in the original typography. Horror shouldn't only be transported through language, but also through a visual dimension. However, placed together, the titles seem like husks; helpless attempts to give fear a name.

The sculptures "barricades" thematise prevention of attack, barricades, and the principle of disturbance by containing these elements themselves. Using materials such as sharp mirror edges, or glass splinters, they directly threaten danger. At the same time, through the arrangement and size of the individual pieces, it is impossible, in the reflections, to get a complete image of something; rather, they show fragments, details, or direct the gaze in a particular direction, consequently manipulating the perception of the viewer.

In the third and last component, Katharina Jahnke puts together, as drawings, an index of censored record covers, where she combines depictions of the original versions with those altered for the censors. The trigger for the need to censor something comes from the fear of an uncontrollable content, and the wish for a perfect surface makes censor "necessary" in the first place. In sober comparison, Katharina Jahnke shows that the allegedly dangerous information may well lead to the realisation that "sometimes a cigar is just a cigar" (Sigmund Freud).

As in the case of censorship, for Katharina Jahnke, it is important, in all works, that the mechanisms of perception, as well as the construction of truth, is questioned. When is something actually there, and when not; and what are the resulting consequences. And, how do we cope with living in a system whose rules are increasingly inscrutable?