KUNSTHALLE ZÜRICH

KEREN CYTTER
KUNSTHALLE ZÜRICH, 2 JULY – 14 AUGUST 2005
PRESS PREVIEW: FRIDAY, 1 JULY, 11 AM
OPENING: FRIDAY, 1 JULY, FROM 6 PM

Israeli artist Keren Cytter (born 1977 in Tel Aviv, lives and works in Amsterdam) tells stories. She does so through experimental movies that draw on a variety of exciting genres, ranging from film noir via fictitious documentaries through to pure cinema verité. She tells short stories in which the everyday collides with the mysterious.

Keren Cytter also tells quite normal but absurd short stories that tread a thin line between the comical, the grotesque and the tragic while also functioning as a commentary on the medium of film. Her films document her surroundings, her friends and family, who act like characters in a kind of dreamworld in which egocentric goals, profound frustrations, personal aspirations and intimate wishes are the content – usually they bring to mind the unnatural amateurish depictions at theater castings.

Cytter deconstructs traditional narrative structures by superimposing video clips with non-harmonized voice and sound sequences that are often doubled up with subtitles, and in this way conjures up an often surprising and always arbitrary reality. Her films arise from image/voice collages that are based on real and fictitious events as well as from autobiographical material. The films possess a special attraction which is expressed through the inner, psychological tension of the actors. They often personify youth, insecure and tormented by existential angst, which through their geographical and cultural displacement find themelves in constant unease with themselves and their environment.

Kunsthalle Zürich is presenting Keren Cytter's first international solo show in Switzerland. She spent the last four years at the studio program De Ateliers in Amsterdam, where most of the films were made – with the exception of a few shot in Israel. Cytter has chosen seven films for her Zurich show that, set within a marvelously fragile architectural structure of rows of wooden sheds, create an intimate world in which her multi-layered narratives are subject to even deeper deconstruction, and where her ostensibly easy-to-grasp film worlds of textual, audio and image levels increasingly meld.

Usually produced in a cheap and simple way, the videos imitate the genre of documentaries and yet the quotes and clichés taken from popular culture, film, Pop music and trash literature expand them, propelling them into a purely fictitious world where our ability to grasp things is sorely tested. For example, in «The Family» several levels of dialog blend, confusing us as gender roles and voices have been deliberately cross-wired. A young man mimes the role of a mother, the one-year old toddler is played by a 20-something-year-old man, the father is played by a young woman, and the other family members are played by the artist's friends, who are her own age. The dialogs consist of a sequence of irrational insults and threats, mixed with wishes and praise. What makes this family conversation so bizarre is the clear absence of any "normal" conversation, replaced here by dark and hidden thoughts.

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Kunsthalle Zürich would like to thank:

Präsidialdepartement der Stadt Zürich, Mondriaan Foundation, Amsterdam, Swiss Re

Events:
Please check out the the up-dated information on our website by clicking www.kunsthallezurich.ch

Catalogue:
In collaboration with the Frankfurter Kunstverein an artist book will be published containing a Stream-of-Consciousness-Text by Keren Cytter, approx. 200 pages, Lukas & Sternberg, Berlin

Public guided tours (in German):
NEW: Sunday tours at 2 pm respectively: 3.7. (Beatrix Ruf) / 7.8. (Samuel Leuenberger)
LUNCH-TIME GUIDED TOURS: Wednesdays at 12.30 pm: 13.7. / 3.8. (Samuel Leuenberger)

Opening times:
Tues/Wed/Fri 12-6pm, Sat/Sun 11am-5 pm, Thurs 12-8 pm, closed on Mondays

Our education and tour program is supported by Swiss Re.

Further information and images available on request.