

KEREN CYTTER
The Mysterious Serious

X is pleased to present **Keren Cytter**'s first major survey in the United States. Born in 1977 in Tel Aviv and currently living in Berlin, Cytter's movies appropriate and transform different cinematic genres, such as film noir, melodrama, documentary, and soap opera. Often set in cheap domestic interiors, Cytter's films depict dysfunctional families and alienated friends on the verge of nervous breakdown. Cytter explores interpersonal relationships as they unravel both in real life and in memory, often producing a disturbing sense of disorientation. Through her favorite cinematic tools —repetition, voice-over, cuts, and a pulsating montage— narratives become fragmented, non-linear, open-ended digressions marked by sudden ruptures and impulsive accelerations.

The exhibition at X includes the stateside premiere of Cytter's new movie *Four Seasons*, 2009, presented alongside a selection of her videos and a group of large-scale drawings never before exhibited in America. Cytter conceived the project as an immersive experience in which synchronized videos alternate on different screens and lights suddenly illuminate her drawings, creating a theatrical choreography of images that require the viewers to circulate through the exhibition space.

Social structures such as families and intimate groups of friends are often depicted in Cytter's work. ***Family*** (2002) portrays a puzzled collection of characters in an empty apartment in which a man plays the role of the mother, a woman acts as a stand-in for the father, while the child is interpreted by a young adult. The compelling dialogues run out of sync so as to suggest the fluidity of conventional family roles and other traditional hierarchies. In ***Atmosphere*** (2005) two young roommates confront their memories and dreams, blurring the boundaries between the real and the imaginary. The frantic dialogues that mark their day are about desire and sex, accompanied by music that shifts from classical to heavy metal. In ***The Victim*** (2006) Cytter portrays five people sitting around a table: the characters appear trapped in an endless circle, repeating their actions over and over again.

An eerie sense of violence animates Cytter's video works. In the three-channel installation ***Repulsion*** (2006), one of her most ambitious works, the artist restages Roman Polanski's 1965 psychological thriller of the same name. In Cytter's remake, three short videos share the same plot, while the three actors exchange roles: The killer turns into the witness, who subsequently plays the victim. A similar atmosphere of suspended anxiety is discernible in ***Something Happened*** (2007), in which the domestic fight between two lovers culminates in a gunshot. As in many other Cytter's works, one can trace a variety of references to the history of cinema and in particular to the work of legendary directors such as John Cassavetes, Jean-Luc Godard, and Michelangelo Antonioni. In ***Les Ruissellements du Diable*** (2008), for example, Cytter confronts the stories of a man and a woman, creating a juxtaposition of identities that immediately evokes atmospheres of a new Nouvelle Vague. One of her more recent videos, ***Four Seasons*** (2009), resonates with notes that might recall the scores composer Leonard Bernstein wrote for Alfred Hitchcock.

Alongside her videos, Cytter presents six large-scale drawings of a skull, a camera, a pentagram, a vinyl and two plans that illustrate the building in which *Four Seasons* is set. As a storyboard for a movie in real time, these new drawings extend Cytter's cinematic practice into the exhibition space, turning the viewers into extras of a new, and continually evolving twisted narrative.

Keren Cytter was born in 1977 in Tel Aviv, Israel. Recent solo exhibitions include CCA Center for Contemporary Art, Kitakyushu (2009), Centro Huarte de Arte Contemporáneo, Navarra (2008), Witte de With, Rotterdam (2008), and MUMOK, Vienna (2007). Her work is currently featured in the 53rd Venice Biennale, and was included in group shows such as The Generational: Younger Than Jesus, The New Museum, New York (2009), Television Delivers People, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2008), Manifesta 7, Trentino (2008) and the Yokohama Triennial, Yokohama (2008).

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