

Final Traces of the Abstract Expressionists

- exhibition and film screening -

In her art, conceptual artist Caro Jost deals with questions of how time, places and events can be captured and preserved in all their complexity. In 2000, she developed her "Streetprints" in New York, a specific method for making invisible traces of the past visible again, depicting them authentically and placing them in a current, contemporary context. "Streetprints" are based on real imprints of street and pavement reliefs on canvas. The traces which people have inscribed into the asphalt with each and every footsteps over decades are recorded, captured and become mixed on the imprint into a unity: time, place and event flow together and the patterns of the invisible past become visible again.

„I am particularly interested in places where artists worked and spend their lives. Tracing their former (or present) studios, sensing the atmosphere of their working conditions, and seeing where works that we all now well were created is the motivation and foundation for my own work.“

Caro Jost

In 2010 Caro Jost began to explore the former places in New York where the Abstract Expressionists had lived and worked as of the mid-1940s. Since then, Caro Jost has been following the paths taken then by those painters through present-day New York with her investigative sense, repeatedly visiting their former studios and meeting places and documenting these in a twofold way: Caro Jost makes "Streetprints" on site and then, in 2014, for the first time in several shootings she filmed whatever was still visible in these places where art history was written. This research resulted in a film documentation *Final Traces of the Abstract Expressionists*. Parallel to this, Jost developed a new series of theme-related pictorial works using and reworking that photo- and film material. On a canvas prepared with a Streetprint she builds up a collage-like pictorial composition in several layers from the film stills, on which she then superimposes painterly interventions.

In the context of a wall installation at the Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, the film, the pictorial works and the Streetprints meet, with a main focus on the former places where Mark Rothko was active in New York.

Caro Jost, *1965 in Munich, Germany. Working in Munich and New York.

After graduating with degrees in Law, she studied Fine Arts at the Art Students League in New York and the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich (Prof. Jean Marc Bustamante).

Caro Jost has become well-known for her own artistic technique: STREETPRINTS (works on canvas), which she developed in 2000 in New York. In addition to numerous international exhibitions and projects, her art works can be found in notable public collections, like Jumex Collection (Mexico City), ICC Collection (Athens&Munich), Chelsea Art Museum (New York), Colby Museum (Maine), Municipal Gallery in the Lenbachhaus, (Munich), MoMA archives (New York) and Guggenheim archives (Venice).

Final Traces of the Abstract Expressionists

New York / Munich, 2014 by Caro Jost

DVD/45 min

Short summary

Artist and Filmmaker Caro Jost returns to the original locations where Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Willem de Kooning, Peggy Guggenheim et al. were active in New York, when art history was made and Abstract Expressionism rose to prominence after 1945 in New York City.

Longer summary

The investigative art film takes viewers to the original locations where the artists of the Abstract Expressionism were active in New York from ca. 1940 - 1970. These locations, at which art history was made, are the former studios and apartments, meeting places and bars, exhibition spaces and galleries of artists like Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning or Mark Rothko.

Artist and film maker Caro Jost follows in the footsteps of these artists of an era. In a mixture of walk and detective hunt, she shows what has now become of these once important places, where the Abstract Expressionism arose after WW II in New York City.

The film is annotated with cites of the mentioned artists and with historical footage: a juxtaposition of the past and the present. The few still living witnesses provide interviews testimony: the today famous artist Alex Katz meets his colleagues Philip Pearlstein, Lois Dodd and Irving Sandler in the former rooms of a gallery, where their careers first started, the widow of Ad Reinhardt re-enters the former studio of her husband and Peggy Guggenheim's granddaughter visits her grandmother's former gallery, today a sewing shop.

"The idea for this investigative art film came when I was working on a project about the artists of Abstract Expressionism in 2008, and found out some of these places still existed. They're not protected in any way and haven't been granted any official historic recognition either. The film stands symbolically for all the crucibles worldwide in which artists have come together, created something and surrendered to their calling; the continued development of art. The film is not a conventional documentary, it is more a inner dialog with these artists." Caro Jost

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The film illustrates final traces of Hans Hofmann, Peggy Guggenheim, Jackson Pollock, Clyfford Still, Willem de Kooning, Arshile Gorky, Adolph Gottlieb, Franz Kline, Barnett Newman, Ad Reinhardt, Mark Rothko and furthermore their meeting points like Cedar Street Tavern, Waldorf Cafeteria, The Club or the Tanager Gallery.

Principal Cast

Irving Sandler, Karole Vail, Alex Katz, Philip Pearlstein, Rita Reinhardt, Lynn Umlauf, u.a.

Music

„Rothko Chapel“ by Morton Feldman

”Music for Jackson Pollock/Hans Namuth” by Morton Feldman

Atmo

Exhibition “Abstract Expressionist New York“, MoMA, New York, 2011