

kerstin engholm galerie

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Constanze Ruhm

A Memory of the Players in a Mirror at Midnight

Opening: 15.11.2001, 7 p.m.

Duration of exhibition: 16.11.2001 – 12.1.2002

"A Memory of the Players in a Mirror at Midnight" is a complex system of installative and filmic elements, which analyzes questions of visual representation and filmic diegesis. The interior architecture of the 1978 film "Eyes of Laura Mars" is taken apart and reorganized through Ruhm's use of digital photographs, wall drawings and video as a site of constructed and emotional memory.

The title "A Memory of the Players in a Mirror at Midnight" refers to a poem by James Joyce, where the "players" in question are actors who have turned into fleeting characters, memories and half-caught reflections. This marries itself to Ruhm's use of cinematic locations, the buildings and landscapes of the film, to create separate images and spaces that dislodge the original from its specific context and relocate them as places at one familiar and yet divorced. The film "Eyes of Laura Mars" (Director: Irving Kershner; Script: John Carpenter) is famous not only as a successful thriller, but as a reference point in visual theory regarding the relationship between cinema and photography. Faye Dunaway plays Laura Mars, a successful fashion photographer who is haunted by visions of violent crimes that are actually happening in New York. These visions become part of her work as a photographer (the photographs for the film were in fact taken by Helmut Newton) and eventually place the protagonist as a voyeur to her own work through her telepathic powers. The film closes with Laura Mars being hunted, and seeing herself being hunted, by the killer.

Constanze Ruhm's photographs and wall drawings create the illusion of a factious space overlaid into the gallery. In the front room, the architecture of the film is analyzed and presented in a kind of spatial cartography. In the back room, a video projection is shown, a journey through a computer reconstruction of her interior spaces of "Eyes of Laura Mars" which draws the viewer further into the complex world of fictitious narratives and spaces that run through all of Ruhm's work.

Constanze Ruhm: born 1965, lives and works in Vienna
recent solo shows (selection): Entwistle Gallery, London (2001); Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum (1999); Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna (1998);
group shows (selection): "Im Buchstabenfeld", Neue Galerie Graz (2001); "Action, Roll: Endroducing", Villa Arson, Nice (2001); "Shopping", Generali Foundation, Vienna (2001); „Illicit Form of Meditation“, Künstlerhaus Stuttgart / haus. 0, Stuttgart (2000); „What is the Enlightenment?“, Jan Van Eyck Akademie, Maastricht (2000); Biennale di Venezia, Austrian Pavillon (1995).
Projects 2002: "Future Cinema", Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe, "Limits of Perception", Barcelona, Fondation Miró; "Economy of Desire: Montage of a Dream Deferred. The Work of Isaac Julien", Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe (curator).

For detailed information on the exhibition, please contact Kerstin Engholm or Eva Kernbauer at (43) 1 585 7337.