

TANJA POL GALERIE

LIFE IS A FUNNY OLD DOG

KRISTINA BRÆIN – FLORIAN MEISENBERG – FRANCIS UPRITCHARD

12/11/08 - 10/01/09

We are pleased to present three different international artists' perspectives in our exhibition entitled LIFE IS A FUNNY OLD DOG.

Kristina Bræin and Francis Upritchard all frequently use *objets trouvés* in their work. Bræin often incorporates them in a context that only represents a minimal shift away from their original application, whereas Upritchard works and transforms the found material so intensively that it takes some effort to identify the original. The perception of objects and everyday rituals is also an important element in Meisenberg's work.

Kristina Bræin lives and works in Oslo. She combines wall paintings with *objets trouvés* and everyday objects to produce large three-dimensional installations. She creates constructions that seem so random that they are reminiscent of what a decorator or a handyman might leave behind by mistake. But Bræin's choice of colours and the way they are assembled are very deliberate and highly poetic. Bræin has recently exhibited her work at the MANIFESTA 7 in Bolzano in northern Italy. There in the ALUMIX hall, she has created a place of quiet and contemplation with her installation made of lampshades, tiles and masking tape, forming a counterpoint to the numerous video and multimedia installations nearby.

Florian Meisenberg, born in 1980 in Berlin, lives and works in Düsseldorf, where he is studying at KUNSTAKADEMIE with Peter Doig. His figurative paintings are often very large and manifest a visual world in which Meisenberg tests the possibilities of the artistic medium. In the manner of a *serio ludere*, a serious game, he combines numerous types of paint and surfaces. He paints with oil on unprimed unstretched canvas. As a result, the painted surface has an aura of leaked oil, or a grease stain. With brush and paint, he writes texts on fabrics that have already been treated with bleach, giving the surface a painterly quality reminiscent of batik. In some pictures the paint is applied so thickly that cracking and distortion and the interplay of shiny and matte areas create landscape-like structures. Spontaneous lines form figures, animals and plants. The silhouette of a chain of mountains also looks like a man's profile, with the trees becoming the eyebrows and the beard. Meisenberg's approach to his subject matter and his use of materials is both audacious and loving. He is the winner of the EUREGIO's 2008 Young Artists' on the Road prize and within this framework was recently showing his work in a solo exhibition at Ludwigforum, Aachen (catalogue). Together with Anna K.E., he set up GALLERY HASEN, a performance project for which they received the Audi Art Award 2008.

Francis Upritchard is exhibiting works from her ongoing series ROMAN PLASTICS. These small objects consist of plastic plant pots in the traditional English Wedgwood style that she has found and lids that she has made to match. The lidded containers are reminiscent of urns or cult objects from

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an unknown culture. As a result of Upritchard's artistic intervention the original patina and flea market character of these objects is transformed into something very elegant. The lids, which are made from modelling clay, are crowned with delicate foliage or heads, which lend the objects the character of a bust. Francis Upritchard was born in 1976. In 2009 she will represent New Zealand at the Venice Biennial. In 2005 she was artist in residence at the Camden Arts Centre in London.