

TANJA POL GALERIE

Alexandra Mueller
In Every Town a Miller
20/06 - 03/08/13

Under the title "In Every Town a Miller," which sounds like a dictate of some sort, Alexandra Mueller unites new paintings, drawings, and ceramics.

Upon entering the exhibition space the viewer sees a multi-part work that fills the wall. At first glance the material is difficult to discern; the wall is covered in objects arranged in an order that is not immediately obvious. Fifty-two ceramics and glass images form a kind of tree structure.

They represent individual cities that the artist has visited or would like to get to know. The ceramics are all "woven" from thinner or thicker strands of clay into vertical rectangles. They are in diverse colors: that of baked clay, or else covered in ink wash or other materials. Although the works are similar, they are, at the same time, singular. Here, Mueller sees an analogy to the human being/individual per se. The same principle is behind every piece, although each is conceived differently. The exhibition and the installation share a title. "Mueller" (Miller), a common German surname, is the artist's last name, but it is also identifies a profession that is known all over the world. In every city, there is, potentially, a Miller.

The other works also deal with biography, individuality, equality, and difference. Titles indicate content and, as always in Mueller's work, are on an equal level with the work itself, even though they do not to solve or redeem anything. Viewers should introduce their own interpretations, and are encouraged to do so.

In this exhibition Alexandra Mueller's consequential exploration of the portrait, which is always intuitively motivated, finds its analogy in the ceramics, among other things, which are set up like codes. The "image" of the work "In Every Town a Miller" is like a typeface, and at the same time, it is an encoded self-portrait. The deep black ceramics and porcelain sculptures titled *Schuh* (Shoe) and *Lakritze* (Licorice) can be seen as such, while at the same time, they are autonomous constructs that are both legible and mysterious.

Visitors may also walk over *Unsere alte Dame* (Our old lady), a cut-out made from a large Persian carpet, a found object. It is shaped like a map of Germany, which, in Mueller's eyes, always resembles the profile of a lady in silhouette. Germany on the Persian: here, the circle of codes—which, in this exhibition could be portrait, self-portrait, family portrait, and city portrait—may possibly come to a close.

Alexandra Mueller, born in 1969, recently had a comprehensive solo exhibition at the Leopold-Hoesch Museum in her native city Dueren. In 2011 she participated in the show "Secret Societies", curated by Alexis Vaillant and Chistina Ricupero. 2009 she showed her work within the exhibition "7x14", curated by Karola Krauss, at Staatlichen Kunsthalle Baden-Baden. All exhibitions were accompagnied by catalogues. in 2012 she had been awardee of the foundation Kunstfonds, Bonn. Alexandra Mueller lives and works in Berlin.