

HOPSTREET

PRESS RELEASE

Hopstreet Gallery brings together the work of **Bettina Buck** and **Sofie Bird Møller** for the first time. The artistic production of these Berlin residents is very different at first sight. At the same time, both artists share several common preoccupations, which they translate in their own way. They both work with existing materials, which are given new meaning after a precise intervention. This exhibition is a dialogue between two artists. The work of both artists takes on new aspects; it reinforces, inspires and enriches the work of the other artist.

The German artist **Bettina Buck** lives and works in London and Berlin. Although she expresses herself in diverse media, her oeuvre is characterised by a quasi-sculptural investigation of materials, volume and texture. She often works with day-to-day objects, giving them new life. She chooses surprising, original materials and plays with them. The work '3 Upright' consists of three independent columns of tiles. The tiles are attached on the back with latex and linen, which keeps the construction in position. Linen, which is considered fragile, becomes a surprisingly powerful material with a supportive function. At the same time, there is an uncertainty and the threat of the column falling over.

Although her choice of materials is rational, Buck often leaves room for coincidence: there is always a possibility that the material – against the artist's will– is going to live its own life. That is also the case in 'Swelling', a series of spume sculptures cast in bronze. She not only contrasts different kinds of material, she also plays with the connotations of both materials. She contrasts 'noble' and durable bronze with cheap and more capricious spume. She works with self-imposed limitations since the final result cannot be completely determined in advance. As Buck puts it, "the objects perform".

Bettina Buck is successfully able to make us experience the exhibition space in a different way with her surprising interventions. 'Hanging Mountains' - a bronze volume that represents a mountain - hangs from the ceiling upside down. That idea of a hanging mountain not only defies logic, it also leads the visitor's gaze to the ceiling, which does not usually play a role in the exhibition space. 'Hunting Scene – Dusk' is somewhat comparable. That work consists of a carpet rolled up in a plastic sheet that 'floats' 16 cm above the floor. It arouses a feeling of alienation because the trusted object is presented in an unusual manner. Buck plays with the associations of a flying carpet and, just like in 'Hanging Mountains', she pokes fun at the laws of gravity.

Sofie Bird Møller (b. 1974) a Danish resident of Berlin works with found materials, just like Bettina Buck. She processes images like engravings, advertising and fashion photos. Her oeuvre, which shows clear cohesion, consists of different series. For her 'Edited Etchings' Møller painstakingly removes details from engravings. She does this with Tipp-Ex then fills in the blotted out background with pencil. She retains the shadows of the vanished object and this emphasises the absence even more. Møller's reworked etches linger between appearance and disappearance. The artist creates a mysterious world of spirits as shown in the processed etch that represents a ghost town or a veil that shrouds a void.

Her 'Interferences' are of a very different order. In that series, Sofie Bird Møller departs from publicity ads from (fashion) magazines. They are covered with a thick, pasty layer of paint. Sometimes just the arms or legs of the model are visible, like a ballet of limbs. It resembles an inadvertent and spontaneous gesture but is a rational and contemplated move. That painted gesture seems indebted to abstract expressionism. The pictorial intervention elevates the advertising materials to works of art; they are given new formulation in a subtle game of colour and composition. Møller formulates visual comments on the imagery of publicity. She paints over the 'objet de désir' thereby repudiating the phantasmagoria.

Møller's interventions are not limited to the studio. Sometimes she works outside, attacking large billboards and advertising panels. Her exhibition in Hopstreet Gallery will extend into the urban fabric. The painting gesture is intensified due to a larger scale in so-called 'Interventions'. In the context of public space, those interventions seem to allude to a 'tag' - a more spontaneous and urban written document.

Sam Steverlynck, March 2012

Sofie Bird Møller (b. 1974) lives and works in Berlin. In 1999 she began her training at the Akademie der Bildende Künste in Munich by Günther Förg, then went on exchange to the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen, and graduated as a Master of Fine Art at the Byam Shaw School of Art in London in 2007. Sofie Bird Møller has exhibited in Germany, France and Denmark and is represented in a number of recognized private collections. Recently a catalogue has been published with texts by the art critic Laura Henseler, the curator Anders Kold of the Louisiana Museum and the German art collector Wilhelm Schürmann.

Bettina Buck (°74 Germany) lives and works in London, studied at the Academy of Media Arts, Cologne before completing an MA in Fine Art at Goldsmiths College, London in 2003. Recent solo exhibitions include: 2011 Monitor, Rome (2010); Rokeby, London (2010, 2008); Statements, Art Basel, with Rokeby, (2009); Mirko Mayer Gallery, Cologne (2009, 2006, 2004). Group shows include The Wharf Road Project, London (2008); Fold Gallery, London (2008); Loto Arte, Rome (2007); Reaparecidos, Museo de la Ciudad, Quito (2007).

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