

Here and now...

Here and now... amnesia
Curated by Katia Hermann

SAVVY Contemporary, May 2011. You approach the SAVVY contemporary gallery and your eyes encounter a small TV-set, placed in the front window. You see a lot of green, tropical vegetation, people strolling through it, you hear silence and every now and then birds chirping. This paradisiac corner welcomes you, spreads its sounds on the street and into the gallery (Paradies by Francesco Rozas). But if you watch and listen long enough, the loop-sound reveals to you the staged nature of this paradise. And you start questioning your need for this kind of oasis. Do you want more authenticity now? Where will you go look for it? An old man swims in place thanks to his harnessing device (Harnessed swimmer, video projection by Dominik Lejman).

Amnesia, Maryna Markova's installation and performance displays a type-writer and a pile of birth certificates waiting to be filled with names: the visitors' names, our names. No matter where we come from, we are being confronted with a Russian-Jewish identity and its bureaucratic embodiment: the birth certificate.

The first exhibition space literally ties you to the memory of war, of old age, of citizenship and racial discrimination.



On the walls Dalila Bouzar's drawings on paper and canvas deal with the theme of war in Algeria. Although untitled, their visual innuendo is one of casualties, death, shootings and blood. In the second exhibition room the titles will reveal the work's message more overtly: *Fraternite, Freiheitskämpfer*.



Also in the second room, the artist's larger works (Flesh 2 and Flesh 3) will offer a change: both in technique (oil on canvas instead of pencil) and in their topic: the body and, maybe, love. This abstract display of large, light-coloured stripes matches the overall sobriety of her works.

Francesco Rozas not only inserts paradisiac images into the exhibition; he also literally lifts the exhibition space. A piece of the wooden floor has been raised a few centimeters above the ground, so that it now presents itself as a coffee table. The floor becomes a table, changes its function and reveals a bit of SAVVY's underground... The surface of the underground!



The gnome in front of the viaduct by Maryna Markova:

A blurry image, almost a shadow projected on a framed white surface.

The ambiguity of this work offers enough space for imagination, projection and... remembrance. While leafing through the exhibition catalogue (a very consistent little book encompassing a variety of texts: analyses, essays, interviews and reviews) I find out this work actually deals with a very material thing: the erasure of soviet memorials.

Another important element of this rather minimalist installation is the pile of big hard-covered books supporting the projector, hence the projection of the contourless image. Books as symbols of knowledge, these huge books as the basis of such a blurry image? I sense a mixture of irony and melancholy in this and I wonder if it's the same feeling that makes the

other visitors linger around the work for while, looking at it, leaving and than coming back to it again.

And there is also the question: what kind of work is this? A photo? A dia-projection, an installation?

Memory I, II, III, IV:

Rebecca Loyche's 4 sound-video installations address the rhetorics of desire and loss, of memory and forgetting. Some discourses are longing and evocative, other wooing and provocative. A sense of incantation mixed with a feeling of protest fills this small exhibition space where speech is king: "Thank you, persistence", "Thank you open windows and unlocked doors", "constant consciousness and carnal craving", "female perfection" and "intensity", "thank you anxiety for keeping us all in check"... These are some of the words that accompany me home after visiting the exhibition.



the artist's hand: table on/off the floor

sunlight's hand: window on the floor

For a couple of days now Francisco Rozas' table sits upside down, topsy-turvy: its broken, fragile legs are waiting for the glue to bring them back to the ground. I must confess: it's very inspiring seeing things off the ground (and underground) at SAVVY... Here and now...

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