

Skafto Kuhn

On the Dark Side of the Moon 19/1–2/3/2013

In the early 1970s, Pink Floyd released their renowned concept album “The Dark Side of the Moon”. It tells of the depths of human existence, torn between the sober conventions of everyday life and escapism with the aid of psychedelic drugs. Pink Floyd’s world of sound takes listeners to an imaginary exile inviting them to drift away.

“And if your head explodes with dark forebodings
too / I’ll see you on the dark side of the moon.”
(Pink Floyd – “Brain Damage”, 1973)



kein Raum mehr, oben auf dem Berg, 2012
etching, watercolour, pencil
107 × 69 × 2 cm



die Verlorenen auf ihrem Pfad, 2012
etching, silkscreen, watercolour, LP-Cover
75 × 53 × 1,5 cm

Skafto Kuhn’s exhibition “On the Dark Side of the Moon” not only implies the title of the rock band’s album, but also visualises the enraptured emotional state and lends it an existential place:

A waterfall made of concrete layers gushes down the stairs and completely dissolves their contour. The intervention in the given architecture lends the gallery space a new, unconventional character. Solidified in its process of flowing, the grey mass also functions as a metaphor of the desire to hold on to an ephemeral moment. Skafto Kuhn’s “shadow world” is furthermore enriched by complex works on paper: mythical protagonists – between abstraction and figuration – reveal themselves in coloured etchings, the geometric structures of which rise to three-dimensionality. Due to the complex working method, which also includes screen print or collage, one can no longer speak of classical etchings. The paper works captivate the viewer through their delicate quality and the allusion to a narrative level that the individual beings and fragments evoke. The surreal landscape is rounded off by the physical presence of amorphous and crystalline sculptures. The question of materiality, its aesthetics and the function in space determine Skafto Kuhn’s sculptural work. His objects made of concrete and fabric are vaguely reminiscent of tree stumps, but also of foreign planets.

Dealing with emotional states can also be found in the subtle colouring of the individual works – citing Pink Floyd’s album cover. It depicts a prism against a dark background refracting white light and unfolding it into spectral colours. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet conceptually permeate the work group, either across the entire surface or pigmented. The rainbow colours symbolically describe a mind-expanding moment. The highly symbolic motif of darkness – visualised by black elements – persists throughout, however. Skafto Kuhn’s complex spatial installation transforms the exhibition venue into a different sphere, at a distance to any normative design. The visitor constantly vacillates between reality and dream and sees him- or herself involuntarily transferred to the role of the escapist.

Anna Schanowski



der Wahninn sitzt im Gras, 2012
 etching, watercolour, pencil, leaf silver
 76,5 × 53 × 2 cm



aber die Sonne wird umkreist vom Mond, 2012
 etching, watercolour, pencil
 98,5 × 69 × 3 cm

Biographical note:

Skafto Kuhn (G *1969) has participated in numerous international exhibition. Most recently, his works were on view in “Secret Societies” at the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt am Main, CAPC Musée d’Art Contemporain Bordeaux (2011 and 2012), “Halleluwah!” at Künstlerhaus Bethanien (2011) and a solo show at Kunstverein Göttingen (2011).

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