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MATHILDE ROSIER  
The Oceanic Feeling  
9/18—11/6/2010

Mathilde Rosier's installations, sculptures, paper works, film and music performances often embody fictional offshoots or parts of a narrative. Constellations of self-made costumes, mystic representations of animals or nature often seem like props, an abandoned stage set, or solitary protagonists of a narrative that is entirely unfamiliar. The combination of painting, film, and theater constructs oneiric situations that allow the beholder to lose any sense of space and time. At the same time, within these "dream states," characterized by empathy, a precise and conceptual analysis of codes and effects of various forms of representation in our society takes place. The title of the exhibition, "The Oceanic Feeling", refers to a correspondence between the writer Romain Rolland and Sigmund Freud, where the "oceanic feeling" is defined as "a sensation of 'eternity', a feeling as of something limitless, unbounded – as it were, 'oceanic'". In response to his critical book on religion, "The Future of an Illusion" from 1927, Freud received a letter from the French writer Romain Rolland, in which he accused Freud of having totally neglected the – as he called it – "oceanic feeling" as a source of religiosity. Freud, however, regarded the "oceanic feeling" more as a memory of the "early phase of the ego-feeling", a state in which the infant does not yet feel itself separated from the outside world. Freud goes on to assume that "there are many people in whose mental life this primary ego-feeling has persisted to a greater or lesser degree", so that it could cause the "oceanic feeling". He was basically more interested in the question pertaining to the "survival of something that was originally there alongside of what was later derived from it."

In this sense, Mathilde Rosier's exhibition, "The Oceanic Feeling", is a sort of "archaeological expedition" to the cultural meaning of mythological symbols, their original reference systems and their influence on the development of social phenomena. The works are based on symbols and narratives of Egyptian

mythology which had an influence on thinkers and artists in the 1920s and 30s mainly due to spectacular finds such as the grave of Pharaoh Tutankhamen in 1922. In the exhibition, the past becomes the "unconscious" of the present choreography of displayed objects. In the main room of the gallery, every half an hour the 10-minute film "All the Time I walk with Time" is shown. It is based on the eponymous performance presented in May 2010 in a theatre in Mönchengladbach that has been deserted for ten years. The architecture was designed by Paul Stoher in the 1950s. Quite renowned at the time, the building lost its cultural relevance in the past decades. In the theatre, no longer open to the public for security reasons, a step dancer and two percussionists performed a choreography alluding to Egyptian depictions in front of empty rows of seats.

Mathilde Rosier's new gouaches show fictional actors of the expedition to the secrets of Egyptology such as the diptych of the "archaeologists" engaged in decoding old finds. These depictions are simultaneously an analogy to the role of the artist as a "discoverer". The 11 small and medium-size gouaches consist of handwritten text and picture fragments referring to Egyptian mythology and, as an autonomous group of works, form the conceptual "storyboard" of the show.

Biography:

MATHILDE ROSIER (\*1973) lives and works in Berlin and in Bourgogne, France. She has been showing solo exhibitions at Musée Jeu de Paume, Paris, Performances at Serpentine Gallery, London, Galleria Raffaella Cortese, Milan and participated at group exhibitions like at Camden Arts Centre, London, currently at Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, up-coming Kunstmuseum Mühlheim and Museum Abteiberg Mönchengladbach. The film "All the time I walk with time" has been produced with support of Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach and NRW Kultursekretariat, Wuppertal.

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