

Anywhere You Look

Stefka Ammon // Sandra Zuanovic
30 March 2007 to 30 April 2007

Stefka Ammon

Stefka Ammon's theme is, as she puts it, "cultural projections, social and personal myths, which I pursue and to which I expose myself in words, images and places."

The project being presented at Stedefreund, "The Moose on the Ice," is an inward and outward quest that originated as a response to her own family's silencing of the past. This was the starting point for various travels, including a trip to Lithuania and a visit to relatives in the USA. Her relatives' accounts, however, were not as informative as conversations with outsiders, with historians and public officials, who paint a picture of what life was like then in Lithuania and, later, in occupied Poland.

Ultimately only a few concrete events could be reconstructed: Ammon's great-uncle was in the Waffen-SS; her grandfather profited from aryanization by taking over a Jewish business.

Today, Ammon still moves through her family's past as through a diffuse semidarkness; in particular, the ways her relatives experienced that time, what they felt and thought, have been nearly impossible to resolve. A jagged line runs through the map of north-central Europe, tracing her family's route from Lithuania through Poland to Lower Saxony in the years between 1941 and 1946. The moose, which she never encountered on her excursions in Lithuania, is perhaps most of all a figure for the hope of understanding her family's history, which seems to change from year to year precisely among those who are still alive today. In Ammon's installation, a personal myth is made visible; yet in this mute, silenced myth, moments in German history are also revealed, moments whose impact extends to the present day and which are still controversial to discuss. (Sabine Sanio)

Sandra Zuanovic

Drawings allow one to concentrate on simple and reflexive moments of image-making. Sandra Zuanovic exhibits this type of "minor" pictorial reflection in the show "Anywhere You Look." All over visual structures are the dominant element of Sandra Zuanovic's drawings – geometric and organic forms, ornamental arrangements. Simple linear patterns grow into a complex construction with numerous levels.

Like her paintings of recent years, these drawings center on banal, everyday motifs like articles of clothing, animals and – constantly recurring – skulls. But the artist is by no means interested in the level of meaning of that which is actually represented; the object, which at first occasions the image, becomes a schema, neutral in meaning, embedded in endless structures of pictorial space.

Inherent in Zuanovic's drawings is the transcription of time: Layer upon layer she lays down the gel pen colors, from garish to glittering, the lines very dense, very close together. Step by step the lines begin to move. They stabilize in seemingly endless variations. The encircled motif becomes a site of concentration; structure and object brave the adventure of an ambiguous togetherness. One and the same story goes on, image by image, until it is superseded and renewed by another image combination.

The interplay of Ammon's and Zuanovic's individual positions is further extended through their collaboration with author and poet Esther Dischereit. What appear at first glance to be her offhand but solid sketches of seemingly normal, everyday impressions turn out to be a tangled mass of severed Ariadne strands that reliably lead to shaky terrain.

"When I resolved
to believe you
you changed the message." [Esther Dischereit]