

stedefreund

MAI TAI

Dieter Lutsch // Katja Pudor
04. Mai 2007 – 26. Mai 2007

Dieter Lutsch

With his installations, objects and sculptures, Dieter Lutsch places the existing spatial and material environment in new perceptual and sensory contexts, thereby revealing new potential for usability and meaning. The exhibition's title, "Mai Tai," is derived from the Tahitian expression "mai tai – roa ae," which may be rendered in English as "out of this world – the best." This title makes ironic reference to the exhibition while simultaneously alluding to the cocktail of the same name and its origins. A cocktail is a colorful mix of different ingredients. It is made by combining individual components that mutually reinforce one another, conjuring up in their perfect union a new and previously unknown taste. Every new cocktail involves experimentation, testing and the curiosity-driven mixture of the new and the familiar. Thus is created an amazing drink that expands the spectrum of previous drinks with a new and interesting taste.

"In 1944, after success with several exotic rum drinks, I felt a new drink was needed. I thought about all the really successful drinks; martinis, manhattans, daiquiris All basically simple drinks.

I was at the service bar in my Oakland restaurant. I took down a bottle of 17-year-old rum. It was J. Wray Nephew from Jamaica; surprisingly golden in color, medium bodied, but with the rich pungent flavor particular to the Jamaican blends. The flavor of this great rum wasn't meant to be overpowered with heavy additions of fruit juices and flavorings. I took a fresh lime, added some orange curacao from Holland, a dash of Rock Candy Syrup, and a dollop of French Orgeat, for its subtle almond flavor. A generous amount of shaved ice and vigorous shaking by hand produced the marriage I was after. Half the lime shell went in for color ...

I stuck in a branch of fresh mint and gave two of them to Ham and Carrie Guild, friends from Tahiti, who were there that night. Carrie took one sip and said, "Mai Tai - Roa Ae". In Tahitian this means "Out of This World - The Best". Well, that was that. I named the drink "Mai Tai".
(...)"

by Victor J. "Trader Vic" Bergeron, San Francisco 1970

Katja Pudor

In her new works, Katja Pudor combines visual motifs of varying provenance, most of them treated with drawing media. These motifs are subject to format restrictions – some limited by the width of the paper, some set off by color, some cut out. Within these formats drawings and paintings are juxtaposed with ink, watercolor, charcoal, marker, cutouts and prefabricated elements such as glue dots. The specific materiality of each component picture both joins and contrasts with the others in the overall combination. With this method of using pictures like modules in an overall image, Pudor builds on the process she developed in her installation paintings. But unlike those, her new works are more strongly oriented toward objective representation. Decorative and ornamental elements, or motifs from traditional Chinese and Japanese art that strike us primarily as decorative because we are unfamiliar with their original meaning and context, are laid out in the manner of graphic design, producing an overall arrangement that appears to be intensely formal and constructivistically abstract.

In the process of appropriation and processing, deconstruction and reconstruction, the relation between authorship, work and viewer shifts toward reciprocity; together they become ingredients in an aesthetic communication process. While the installations, in particular, involved some extremely harsh confrontations among their elements, the works with drawing media on paper are more orderly, easier to grasp, and may even be received as "eye candy." Yet the edge remains, the confrontation of images that reminds us of their mediation – not a picture of a landscape, for example, but rather a picture of the use of a landscape motif. In this there is a trace of disillusionment, but the media-mediated world is just as much ours as the actual one, whose actual appearance is unknown to us. – Michael Bach