

MARIA BRUNNER

*KATHEDRaLe*

February 29 - April 8, 2020

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Galerie Gisela Capitain is pleased to announce the ninth exhibition of new works by Austrian artist Maria Brunner.

In the exhibition "KATHEDRaLe," Maria Brunner shows ten large-format photographs of views of the Cologne Cathedral printed on transparent PVC lamella curtains.

The exhibited works refer to an earlier group of works by the artist: the 1997 series of photographs "Domhotel" based on the film "Not Reconciled " (1965) by Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet, adapted from the novel "Billiards at Half Past Nine " (1959) by Heinrich Böll. The film tells the story of a family of Rhineland architects over three generations. One setting of the film is a room with a balcony in the Domhotel in Cologne, with a view of the Gothic cathedral. Brunner took the photos of the Cologne Cathedral in this very room. The recurring motif is the view out of the window, in various variations: the transparent curtain in front of the balcony window is sometimes open, sometimes closed or moved by the wind, and the image detail that Brunner has chosen also changes.

From the analog black-and-white photographs of 1997, a completely new conceptual work has emerged that plays with spatial perception, transparency, and the transitoriness of images. Brunner detaches the photographs from their original context and releases them for a purely aesthetic examination. Depicted scenery and interior design - both of the depicted and the real space - and their perception become essential motifs of the picture.

The motifs are printed in extreme magnification on industrially manufactured industry curtains, which in their material characteristics contrast with the pictured historical building, with the ornamentation of the cathedral carved in stone. In contrast to the massive, static architecture of the cathedral is the lightness, flexibility, and transparency of Brunner's chosen material.

The installation of the works in the room restructures the gallery spaces and, at the same time, refers to them. The space of the hotel room in which the photographs were taken determines the given spaces. Brunner arranges the room in such a way that the viewer takes the perspective of the hotel guest, thus conveying an unexpected spatial experience to the visitor.

Just as the photographs capture a fleeting moment, the works themselves represent such a fleeting moment. The lamellas are in constant movement. The empty spaces created by the transparency of the material are complemented by the environment of the works. This environment is also constantly changing, lighting conditions change; people act in the space. The works have a cinematographic character. Although they are not moving images in the true sense of the word, they are in constant transformation.

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As in her early, conceptual photography series "The Last Tango," 1996, and "Interior," 1997, Brunner deliberately plays in this presentation with pictorial levels, principles of perception, spaces, interior and exterior, both formally and in terms of content. Spatial overlaps take place on several levels: In the motif itself, the exterior space immanent in the picture, the cathedral façade, becomes a fixed component of the hotel room inventory. The transparent projection surface, cut into lamella, allows views through it to inscribe themselves into the motif. What is depicted is repeated in reality. The curtains are installed in the room in such a way that the visitor can look at them from both sides; he is located simultaneously in the inside and outside of the motif. Boundaries between an inside and an outside become blurred, the outside becomes part of the inside and vice versa. The curtain becomes a synonym for the thought that one pushes back and forth.

Maria Brunner's core themes, which she also addresses in her painting, are manifested in the exhibited group of works: The creation and perception of the surface as space and vice versa, as well as the possibilities of representing a three-dimensional object on a two-dimensional surface. The opening of the pictorial space into real space is also a recurring theme in Brunner's work. The reference to her painting reveals itself not only in the attempt to define a space through objects, in the superimposition of pictorial levels, and the play with principles of perception but also in the examination of materiality and fabric.