

Uta Eisenreich

As If

4 September – 9 October 2021



Uta Eisenreich's visual world is one with many worlds within. In her long-awaited new book **AS IF** and the eponymous solo show at Ellen de Bruijne PROJECTS, Uta Eisenreich explores representation and language, following her interest in perception and illusion. Her photographic still lifes bear a particular sense of logic; they challenge the quotidian by applying an impression of absurdity and apparent banality with scientific precision. A certain oddity might confuse the eye, despite the precise and

linear structures, the hidden patterns, and layers of meanings in the images. Uta Eisenreich's work is a playground for the viewer to construct meaning out of re-signified and de-signified objects.

As philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein expressed in his *Philosophical Investigations*, words are not defined by reference to the objects they designate, nor by what is mentally associated with them, but by how they are employed. In a playful yet calculated manner, Eisenreich draws from theories of language learning and popular symbol systems, from emojis to the grammatical and mathematical visualisations of Maria Montessori. Altogether, they form a rich repository of linguistic propositions that question and inform our collective consciousness.

By means of either isolating or grouping objects and distilling them to primary shapes, colours, and silhouettes – reminiscent of De Stijl or the psychology of colour from the Bauhaus – Eisenreich looks into methods of abstraction and minimalization. The common object is a protean character that transforms from its humble self into an abstract sign, from a character into a product with a certain value. How can an object become a sign? How much meaning and intention can be read in a couple of emoji? How can an object be transformed into a character or a product? Things are attractively amalgamated in the artist's images to constitute a world of reflections and shadows, of levels and horizons, of similitude and contrast, where everything is as it seems, except it is not.

Borrowing from the language of commercial product photography, Eisenreich infuses objects with an acute and dramatic sense of the ominous. The never-ending production of cheap and unsustainable supplies that Hypercapitalism sustains with an attractive, glossy layer is zoomed in and darkened in the artist's pictures. What usually catches our eye and lights consumerism in us is turned into a sinister reminder of the many ecological crises we are facing.

With hieroglyphical sense-making, Uta Eisenreich simultaneously informs and twists our expectations of reality. In an ongoing practice of expanding meaning, her work is a visual feast of the semiotics of the everyday. Wittily, Uta Eisenreich makes things perform before the lens of the camera in an intriguing play of suggestion and transformation, piercing their superficial veneer and breathing a most fascinating animism into them.