

MARIETA CHIRULESCU

29 February – 4 May 2013

On the first floor, the Berlin based Romanian artist, Marieta Chirulescu, shows her work for the first time in Belgium after being exhibited at the Kunsthalle Basel in 2010, in Nuremberg (Kunstverein and Neues Museum) in 2011 and last year at Art Basel with the Micky Schubert gallery.

The exhibition reflects a certain minimalism in giving prominence to the works. Thus, the work in the alcove is not on the front wall but on a side wall indicating from the outset that what there is to see in her work in general is as visible from an angle than head-on.

When noticing fragments of ".doc" icons, symbolizing files from the word processing software Microsoft Word, the visitor understands that the artist draws on the computing world in the areas of digital and scanned documents as input for her abstract thinking.

Chirulescu favours a mechanical technique while sometimes putting it in correlation with a visible gesture in the form of brushstrokes, fingers or with collages. Despite the minimal and objective nature, we see an underlying expressiveness that seems to consist of marks, redactions or erasures. This is reinforced when we know that the sources that she uses include cropped documents, found photographs, scanned images, printed and reworked archives,...

Starting out from some not very meaningful images (badly printed documents, erased fragments), rearranging them and removing any memory from them, Chirulescu does not allow the viewer to establish any narrative. She raises the question of what an image is. It is also interesting to note in this regard that she reproduces what is referred to in computer jargon as an "icon" (from the Greek eikon, which means "image") and it cannot fail to make one think of sacred images in the Orthodox tradition.

In a sense, she is joining a process of pictorial reflection which ranges from the Russian constructivists to the Bauhaus, through Theo Van Doesburg's theories of concrete art. Her interest in technological processes (but without searching for the ultimate, on the contrary) and the desire to reduce painting to its minimum visual expression puts Chirulescu within this tradition. But one of her particular features is that her painting oscillates between erasure and timid revelation, between deliberate mistakes and acknowledged deletions. She seems to favour the aesthetics of the marginal, the ignored, far-removed from flashiness and attempts to charm.