

# **NINA BEIER**

## **Steering Wheel Choker Chain**

08 | 11 | 2013 - 20 | 12 | 2013

### **STEERING WHEEL CHOKER CHAIN**

Nina Beier

NOVEMBER 8 - DECEMBER 20 2013

**GALLERI  
NICOLAI WALLNER**

Galleri Nicolai Wallner is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new works by Nina Beier. The works are from Beier's latest series, which continues her exploration into the use of objects as empty, free floating signs as it is found in such differing fields as textile design and stock photography. *Steering Wheel Choker Chain* marks Beier's first exhibition at Galleri Nicolai Wallner

Beier's practice charts lines of flight through the social and political problematics of representation and exchange, uncovering and re-shrouding phenomena so as to identify moments of conflict and correlation. One of her primary fields of interest is that of tracing the fidelity of meaning through the convoluted relationships between objects and images, pinpointing the various ways mediation mutates information from things to representations and back again—how images subsume or discard their referents to become distinct objects in their own right.

The use of objects as symbols of power is traditionally found in heraldry and charges. Here we find depictions of anything from tools representing their field of function to established symbolic language. Textile design as we know it from Hermès scarves and West African wax prints borrow from this visual tradition, but the unconstrained and authorless processes of

their production allows for an almost complete autonomy from symbolism and message, serving as mere decoration. An inheritor of a colonialist and museological paradigm, the design policy of Hermès states that their scarves can depict anything. This lack of restriction bears resemblance to a trope in stock photography that feature objects in open metaphorical configurations, which the artist has repeatedly returned to in her work. Here too the depicted object compositions have no particular intention injected from the author's side, and the more they can possibly mean to their viewers the more profitable they are. Particular objects enter into the infinite inventories of these terrains and become flattened, literally and figuratively, at once interchangeable, equivalent, and vacant of meaning, yet charged with possible significations. In this crux of potential symbolism and meaningless aesthetics lies an ambiguity in which Beier chooses to work.

With *Steering Wheel Choker Chain* at Galleri Nicolai Wallner, five panels line the walls of the exhibition space, each featuring an intermingled disparate group of objects not normally encountered together—steering wheels, remote controls, fake nails, choker-style necklaces, reading glasses, teaspoons, foxtail key rings, and disposable razors—exaggerating the concurrent heterogeneity and homogeneity of the abovementioned fields. Pattern functions as a motivating factor, and the inclusion of several objects that carry prints invites for further complexity. Crammed into frames with foam so they are apprehended at first also as a flattened image, the assemblages of objects, textiles depicting objects, and objects printed with the images of other things, muddles up any easy distinctions between images and physical things. Arranged in decorative and repeating formations, the juxtapositions likewise construct intimate conversations between things, detached from any overriding representation or narrative. Can the objects be regarded just as they are, or does symbolism persist even in these irrational convergences of things in an abstract field? Beier's presentations resist any simple conciliation, embracing the inherent duality of a language of objects, at once stuck between what they are and all what they can refer to.

Nina Beier (b.1975, Denmark) lives and works in Berlin. Beier attended The Royal College of Art in London, UK. Beier has exhibited extensively across Europe and North America, with exhibitions at Kunsthall Charlottenborg (Copenhagen), Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (San Francisco), Contemporary Art Museum (St. Louis), Musée d'art modern de la ville de Paris (Paris), Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), MoCA (Miami), Project Arts Centre (Dublin), Hamburger Bahnhof (Berlin) and CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts (San Francisco) among others.

\* Text made with excerpts from Matthew Post (Post Brother)'s essay accompanying the work in the exhibition.