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## BolteLang

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### *Reliability of Recognition*

A group show with **Claudia Comte, Daniel Gustav Cramer, Matthias Dornfeld, Jonathan Gardner, Dagmar Heppner, Raffi Kalenderian, Sam Porritt, Benjamin Senior, Jesse Wine**  
28<sup>th</sup> February – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2015  
Opening 27<sup>th</sup> February, 6 - 8 pm

### *About Portraits*

At three months a baby smiles when it sees a face. It beams so much that one gets the impression to be recognised. But one is deceived as it merely recognises an outline, and not the actual person.

We all know how strong this perception can be. A glance in a reflective shop window, or in a mirror even, surprises us again and again. Is that me? Is that really me? In a movie Bruce Willis described this situation as strikingly as his stingers and blows can be. Battered and destroyed he looks into the bathroom mirror after waking up: 'I don't know you but I'll shave you anyway.' There is no better way to summarise the philosophy of the twentieth century.

So recognising is difficult. Maybe that is why in some portraits, such as those by Dagmar Heppner, the face is missing. Because it does not provide the reliability of recognition one hopes for, because it can deceive? Maybe this absence is also a hint, that the important thing is always missing anyway, and that what we do not see is just as important as what we see. D. G. Cramer's portraits seem to show this and in their vagueness they strongly emphasise the character of the image.

In this way the portrait can exceed itself, like the Mickey Mouse ears in Claudia Comte's works. It can become a table like the female torso, or even a plate, which can present all kinds of things. The portrait then becomes an image, Matthias Dornfeld seems to be saying.

So it seems that portraits are to a lesser extent about recognition, which is not a sign of a flaw or an absence, much more an openness that becomes an opening, through which one can see humankind like in Benjamin Senior's work. It is an opening onto something different, something new. Which leads us back to our baby, which does not yet recognise but might already realise. Its smile is seduction and hence anticipates what will be and can be. With itself and with others.

*Dr. phil Olaf Knellessen*

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