

STANDARD (OSLO)
PRESS RELEASE

NINA BEIER: "BLEEDING CLOTHES, DROWNING COINS"
04.11.-03.12.2011 / PREVIEW: FRIDAY 04.11.2011 / 19.00-21.00

STANDARD (OSLO) is proud to announce its first solo exhibition with Berlin-based artist Nina Beier. Entitled "Bleeding Clothes, Drowning Coins", the exhibition is comprised of framed works and sculptures from her recent series, "Portrait Mode" and "The Demonstrators". Making the claim that one must kill an object in order to animate it, the exhibition portrays futility as a state of pure presence. As suggested by Heidegger's 'tool analysis', only broken objects can truly be experienced for what they are. By employing found images and found garments as her raw material, Beier pushes this reduction of meaning as images become garments and garments become images.

"A universe made up of objects wrapped in objects wrapped in objects wrapped in objects."

- Graham Harman, *Guerrilla Metaphysics: Phenomenology and the Carpentry of Things*, 2005

Roy, the bioengineered robot, and Joanna, the swimsuit model, are united by one common goal: they want more life. Whereas the first is the antagonist android from Ridley Scott's "Blade Runner" (1982) who seeks out his inventor to extend his due date that is fast approaching, the latter gets naked for the organization PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) to put an end to the cruelty of the fur industry. Confronted with the question of exactly what is life or what is being, on the other hand, one would imagine the two faced with a tougher task and less of an agreement. One would hardly either assume that they would reach for Martin Heidegger's "Being And Time" (1927) to provide the answer. However, at the very foundation of Heidegger's problem – asking himself what is the being that will give access to the question of the meaning of Being – the answer is that it can only be that being for whom the question of Being is important. If the being for whom Being matters, is who the German philosopher had in mind, then the above-mentioned attempts at renewing or saving lives are not so far from it.

"Bleeding Clothes, Drowning Coins" revisits this problem complex: to what extent can the lifeless through mimicking of life actually come to life? At the core of Beier's sculptures "The Demonstrators" are images purchased from various stock photography agencies. Online archives like Dreamstime – one of many providing digital image source material and licensing – offer a massive mosaic of illustration photographs. These studio images (or pure Illustrator invention) are characterized by a graphic reduction or pictogram realism. There is no particular author or no particular destination for these images. Rather the intention is to capitalize on media's ever recurring need to illustrate the widest possible range of events, facts and relations. For this exhibition Beier has made use of motives matching the keywords "drowning coins". The found images are

here merged with found objects; poster print-outs are dipped in glue and hung to dry on different sorts of trapezes that are suspended from the ceiling and arranged around the gallery space.

Not only do these trapezes serve as display cases, but also remind one of the biomorphic basis for sculpture. In this case, however, the body has gone missing. The image has taken the place of the gymnast. The billboard paper has been draped onto the trapeze like a second skin or a wet T-shirt allowing a complete merging of sign, support and that which is signified. Merging might here just be another word for collapse, as what we're witness to is more a short-circuiting than reconfiguring of language. Standing in front of the various posters that are offering variations of coins falling into water, one is confronted with these images' careful balancing between being generally specific or specifically general. They are seeking a recognizable symbolical value while yet remaining open metaphors. Whether they are referring to coins being tossed in for good luck, money being lost, being in debt or currencies being down is of minor importance. The ability they have to be referring to all of these and more is what is of importance. Beier's works are in other words left to reflect upon their own sense of 'being'. The posters, one would claim, are distinguished by their lack of intentionality in the sense of 'sincerity' (Graham Harman). While the poster and trapeze are firmly glued together, Beier takes interest in how they remain without an adhesive that is cementing subject and object together so the intentional experience is one.

Adding to the sculptures are framed works belonging to the recent series, "Portrait Mode", in which Beier makes use of second-hand clothes as material. Having accumulated rich amounts of garments, Beier then sorts, selects and arranges these into compositions. However, working with the glass of the frame facing down she's also working from the opposite of the picture plane; the garments are layered with little control of how the front would finally appear. Equally so, Beier has on this occasion taken an interest in certain fabrics characterized by an inherent unstable quality. As would be the case with cotton fabrics in the style 'bleeding Madras' – made popular during the 1960s – the dyes used are not colourfast, which results in bleeding and fading colours that alter the appearance of the fabric each time it is laundered. This quality of changing hues, shades and colours has here been juxtaposed with animal prints. In both cases it makes sense to speak of 'animation', as a certain sense of vigor or attempts at bringing to life. The animal prints reference the natural while coming across as entirely unnatural (being fake snake and moc croc to the great enthusiasm of super model Joanna and PETA alike). Like the poster print-outs of drowning coins they are lifeless imitations of life. These pieces of second-hand clothing may have been given an extension or a second life, but like the ostentation of the museum diorama it is one left with more of the hyperreal than the real.

"Tyrell: What..? What seems to be the problem?"

Roy: Death ...

Tyrell: Death. Well, I'm afraid that's a little out of my jurisdiction, you...

Roy: I want more life, fucker."

- Ridley Scott: "Blade Runner", Warner Bros. Pictures, 1982

Nina Beier (b. 1975, Copenhagen) received her MA from Royal College of Art in London. Recent solo exhibitions include "Nina Beier" at Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen;

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco; Croy Nielsen, Berlin; and Laura Bartlett Gallery, London. Beier's works have been included in various group exhibitions such as "Modidy, As Needed", Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami; "What happened to the other dollar?", Proyectos Monclova, Mexico City; "Exhibition, Exhibition", Castello di Rivoli, Turin; "Museum of Speech", Extra City, Antwerp; "Lost and Found"; and Neugerriemschneider, Berlin. Next month Beier will be showcasing outdoor sculptures in the Public section of Art Basel Miami Beach as well as contributing to a four artists-presentation under the auspices of STANDARD (OSLO).

For further information please visit our webpage: www.standardoslo.no or contact Eivind Furnesvik at eivind@standardoslo.no or +47 917 07 429 / +47 22 60 13 10. STANDARD (OSLO) is open Tuesday-Friday: 12.00-17.00 / Saturday: 12.00-16.00. Sunday and Monday: Closed

Upcoming exhibitions:

Art Basel Miami Beach
01.12.-05.12.2011

Torbjørn Rødland: "Eighteen Analogue Double Exposures"
09.12.2011-14.12.2012