

Sies + Höke Galerie

Poststrasse 2+3
40213 Düsseldorf

t +49. 211. 13 56 67
f +49. 211. 13 56 68
post@sieshoeke.com
www.sieshoeke.com

Pressemitteilung

Henning Strassburger: JANE

8. September – 8. Oktober 2017, Eröffnung: Freitag, 8. September 18-22 Uhr

'I took one look at the house and I knew, I just knew' recounts Jane Fonda in softly-spoken tone. In a theatrical video that appeared online at the beginning of the year, the two-time Academy Award winner shared her personal memories to say goodbye to the impressive modernist mansion that she had bought in 2012. Engaging with new technologies, Fonda provocatively merges private self with public identity.

The publicity of the private, argues architectural historian Beatriz Colomina in *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture and Mass Media*, is a product of modernity. With the emergence of the mass media that have come to define twentieth-century culture, the inside of the house became an extension of the public life of spectacle. It is in this vein that Henning Strassburger's *JANE*, the artist's second exhibition with Sies + Höke challenges notions of public and private, exterior and interior.

Upon entering the gallery we find ourselves within a domestic interior - as if we walked into Fonda's home, but bereft of its polished luxury. A window is fully covered with neutral-coloured blinds to deliberately return our gaze to the interior. A table made of raw concrete evokes modernist associations; a monotone male voice is heard through the loudspeaker of a projection showing a broadcast in continuous loop; and abstracted paintings of bold colour are perfectly placed on the walls. Even though there is something eerie and uncomfortable to this flawless setting, a sense of security is produced by the position of its familiar objects. As such, Strassburger's comfort in this space signifies both physical control and psychological shelter.

On closer inspection we realise that the concrete table takes its form and shape from the measurements of Fonda's lot, whereby the pool, a recurring subject in Strassburger's practice, is cut out, leaving a void. The architectural remodelling is based on satellite imagery sourced from Google Maps, which are publicly accessible. A short video clip, shot on an Iphone in low resolution and shaky appearance, captures the immediate Beverly Hills neighbourhood and enhances our understanding of the affluent surroundings of Fonda's former home. We are evidently stalking and thus exploiting the actress' privacy.

The rigorous straight lines of the architectural table are traversed with fluid and carefree marks and swirls that are applied to the paintings. The guiding principles of Strassburger's method are impulsive and determined at the same time. Colour and content overlap to merge into polychromatic and multi-layered canvases of abstract gestures. The graphic sensibilities that stem from an interest in advertising imagery convey a sense of lightness and intimacy that provide a refreshing counterpart to the otherwise cold and artificial environment.

The video projection retells Fonda's promotional campaign. Her monologue is translated into German and narrated by a male counterpart. As much as challenging typical gender roles and their traditionally assigned public and private spheres, the work captures an emotional approach towards architecture and the home.

Sies + Höke Galerie

Poststrasse 2+3
40213 Düsseldorf

t +49. 211. 13 56 67
f +49. 211. 13 56 68
post@sieshoeke.com
www.sieshoeke.com

A further projection is shown in the upstairs gallery. The same actor is positioned against a dark background and his upper body is tightly framed by the camera angle. His tense body movements and minimal facial emotions seem to suggest a moment of aggression or defense that is directed against the viewer. Compellingly intimidating are the piercing eyes, which prompt us to recede and we find ourselves longing for that reassuring shelter that we call home.

- Jelena Seng

Henning Strassburger wurde 1983 in Meißen geboren und lebt und arbeitet in Berlin.
Zu seinen letzten Einzelausstellungen zählen: *Bleaching is Teaching*, Kunstverein Reutlingen, Reutlingen (2016), *Think Tank*, Kunstverein Oldenburg, Oldenburg (2015), *What this does*, Salon Dahmann, Berlin (2014), *Strike the Pose*, Soy Capitán. Heike Tosun, Berlin (2014).

Zu seinen letzten Gruppenausstellungen gehören: *Luggage and observations*, Galerie Klaus Gerrit Friese, Stuttgart (2014) »Wo ist hier?« Kunstverein Reutlingen (2014), *Unfinished Season*, Galerie Nagel/Draxler, Cologne (2014), *The Digital Divide* by Henning Strassburger, Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf (2013), Berlin.Status(2), Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2013), *Deep Cuts*, Anna Kustera Gallery, New York (2013)

For further information, please contact Tine Lurati: tine@sieshoeke.com