

ANDREW KREPS GALLERY

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Annette Kelm

Knots

April 7 – May 12, 2018

Opening Reception: Saturday, April 7, 6-8pm

Andrew Kreps Gallery is pleased to present *Knots*, Annette Kelm's fourth solo exhibition with the gallery.

In her work, Kelm is interested in the function of objects and the nature of their representation, typologies, mass production, design, and technology. Her photographs often conflate several genres into single images, or develop single motifs across serial images to combine a variety of artistic, historical, and cross-cultural references.

For the works in the exhibition, Kelm utilizes fancy and unusual textile backdrops to address questions of textile design as a form of visual language, and the representation of global trade routes. In *Good Morning* an unfolded, generically printed table napkin salutes the viewer in English, French, Spanish, and German - the four suns shining brightly behind the words. Small flower blossoms and the thick black cable of a flash unit cover the napkin, alluding to the studio technique behind the image, which is a recurring theme in Kelm's photographs. The fold becomes an investigation of its own here as in *Red Stripes*, where mass-produced textile objects are unfolded or refolded.

Juxtaposing solid and ephemeral objects, nature and consumer culture is another central motif in Annette Kelm's work. Often contrasting symbols of wealth and of ephemerality, her images can be understood as contemporary interpretations of Vanitas still-lives. In recent years, Kelm began to combine flowers with currency notes, such as in *Home Fountain* or in *Leaves* where autumn leaves slightly cover a stash of dollar bills. In *Gems* a small book about Gemstones and the delicate leaves of a perennial honesty plant lay atop a dotted background resembling Photoshop desktop backdrops. The illusion of space and materiality remains a basic theme in Kelm's work in the use of currency notes and other mercantile objects. *Found Object (Balance)*, depicts a wooden model of a scale targeting the problem of the lack of material relation in the global finance system. Scale can also be understood as a reference to proportion, which is also a recurring strategy in her work.

Kelm's pictures often refer to the traditional materials of art. With the tiny easel in *Mini Easel Relief* Kelm picks up on a classical artist tool, although the easel in her picture seems to be a gimmick item. *Pac Man Pepper* is used equally playful as an artist's palette that resembles a face lies on a canvas next to pepper plant branches. The title consequently refers to Pac Man, the character of the famous Japanese video game, a nostalgic reference to the early Eighties. *Ludwig Stiftung Aachen, Basement*, a documentary picture that shows a corner of the cellar at *Ludwig Foundation*, functions as a counterpart to Kelm's studio works. The image depicts artworks from different epochs placed randomly next to objects of utility; a curious compilation of religious, officially and privately commissioned art throughout the ages. *Josephine* is a staged studio portrait of the artist Josephine Pryde, part of a larger series of artist portraits taken by Kelm. Pryde holds a cocktail glass with a decorated straw, which is in stark contrast to her expression. She clenches her fist with an angled arm – is she hiding something precious in her hand or is it a triumphant gesture? Is she threatening the viewer with violence, or rather showing her willingness to fight back at a rate of knots?

Text: Anna Voswinckel

Annette Kelm's work will be the subject of forthcoming exhibitions at the Kunsthalle Vienna, Vienna in 2019, and the Ludwig Foundation, Aachen, Germany in 2018. Past solo exhibitions of Kelm's work include *Annette Kelm: Leaves*, Kestnergesellschaft, Hannover, Germany, 2017, *Detroit City/Detroit Affinities: Annette Kelm*, Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Detroit, 2016, *Dust*, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, Germany, 2014, *Annette Kelm*, Kunsthalle Zürich, Zürich, 2009, KW – Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, 2009, CCA Wattis, Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco, 2008 and Witte de With, Rotterdam, Netherlands, 2008. In 2013, Kelm participated in *New Photography*, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and in 2011, participated in *ILLUMInations*, curated by Bice Curiger, the 54th International Exhibition at the Venice Biennale, Venice. Her work is held in the permanent collections of institutions including Tate Modern, London, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Centre Pompidou, Paris, Guggenheim Museum, New York, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, the Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, and Kunsthau Zürich, among others.