

OFFICE BAROQUE GALLERY

KIRSTEN PIEROTH

16 March – 28 April 2012

Opening preview Thursday 15 March at 18.00h

Office Baroque Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new works by Kirsten Pieroth. This will be the artist's first solo exhibition at the gallery.

The central work in the exhibition is *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 2011-2012, an installation of nine vitrines displaying over 100 original adverts from print magazines of the past several decades, all sourced by the artist. Each advert is for a product which was introduced onto the market in the last hundred years, and the pages are presented chronologically according to the date of their product's introduction. Together they represent a biography of the last century of consumer consumption and technological innovation. Furthermore, however, Pieroth is interested in the narrative structures which these adverts and the objects they portray create and the linguistic connections and coincidences which arise from their display together. Despite dating from many different times, not necessarily corresponding to the original time of introduction, these adverts become collages, an illustrated tableau of modern life's ideas of technology and progress. A barcode announces "the end of the long check-out line", a digital watch shows 12:58, the short-lived supersonic era of concorde is heralded.

The idea of time and how we perceive it in relation to ourselves and to our histories comes into question, as does the very idea of representing history, which can only ever be subjective.

Although the adverts are arranged chronologically, many alternative narratives can be read in their connections and juxtapositions. One begins to see seemingly purposeful formal and linguistic links between pages which are in fact entirely arbitrary and only strengthen the idea that society's and individuals' histories are not rigid, but open to the ambiguities of code, interpretation and personal experience.

*Model Merriweather*, 2012, developed from the artist's continued research into one of the products featured in the advertisements in the vitrines, frozen food. A 365-litre deep-freezer forms a pedestal to exhibit three photographs taken from a 1965 LIFE Magazine article on the American socialite Marjorie Merriweather Post, the heiress to a cereal fortune, who went on to found General Foods, owner of Birdseye Frozen Food. The photographs depict her servants preparing for a dinner party in one of her many homes. The commercial freezing of food was an important development in the 20th century and became a major business and Merriweather was at one time the richest woman in America, with a fortune entirely based on the development and sale of mass-market food products. She was a major collector of Russian and European Imperial Art and was well known for her extravagant lifestyle.

In one photograph, a servant is seen using a yardstick to measure the distance between place settings, an echo of the timeline represented and questioned in the vitrines. The contrast between the mundanity of a simple household appliance and the excess of Merriweather's lifestyle provides an interesting backdrop to an analysis of the idea of depiction. The photographs are housed in the kind of Perspex stands used at an electronics store. The wealthy Merriweather displays treasures once owned by royalty or bought in the aftermath of political upheaval.

OFFICE BAROQUE GALLERY

Lange Kievitstraat 48, BE-2018 Antwerp  
+32 (0)484 599 228  
info@officebaroque.com  
www.officebaroque.com

Gallery hours:  
Wednesday – Saturday, 14.00 – 18.00  
and by appointment