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HANS OP DE BEECK

Small Constructions

Opening: 15.3.2012, 19 Uhr

Exhibition duration: 16.3. - 20.4.2012

The artist is present.

Following an intensive period in which Hans Op de Beeck realized exceptionally large, multidisciplinary projects – such as his solo exhibition ‘Sea of Tranquillity’, which is currently touring Europe, and his monumental immersive installation ‘Location (7)’ at the most recent Venice Biennale – for this gallery exhibition he has turned his hand to smaller, more playful and intimistic works.

The exhibition consists of two parts. The first comprises a series of soft grey three-dimensional pieces, wall-mounted as well as free-standing, in which sculptural interpretations of familiar, banal objects have been brought together on a full and reduced scale to form sober but suggestive compositions. The second part is comprised of a series of black-and-white paintings on canvas, with visual archetypes from the cinematographic tradition commenting on the staging of our daily lives: how we shape it, how we understand it, how we deal with it.

The three-dimensional works from the exhibition mainly evoke the tradition of the still life. The paintings, on the other hand, reflect the visual imagery of the feature film and the constructed image. The idea of the *mise en scène* or the construction of the image plays a role in both media. The new sculptures can be seen as special collections of props from daily life, the paintings as its décors.

The word ‘construction’ denotes both the building of something from individual components and the way in which the various parts of a piece of work are put together. In short, a construction is a ‘composite whole’. But the artist uses the title ‘Small Constructions’ to refer not just to this literal meaning but also to small mental constructions, such as random thoughts and free associations.

Whereas Op de Beeck’s recent major projects, including ‘Sea of Tranquillity’, started from the grand narrative of reality and the darker aspects of a globalized and technologized capitalist environment, these ‘small constructions’ have more of a timeless, serene, introverted and contemplative character. Hans Op de Beeck sees ‘Small Constructions’ as a kind of exercise in the peace and quiet of the modest art of figurative painting, in which compositions of banal objects, figures, archetypes and subjects have a ‘low key’, almost obvious presence and gently encourage viewers to let their minds wander.